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# *Voices and Places of The People of God*

THE DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE



DAVID HAINS



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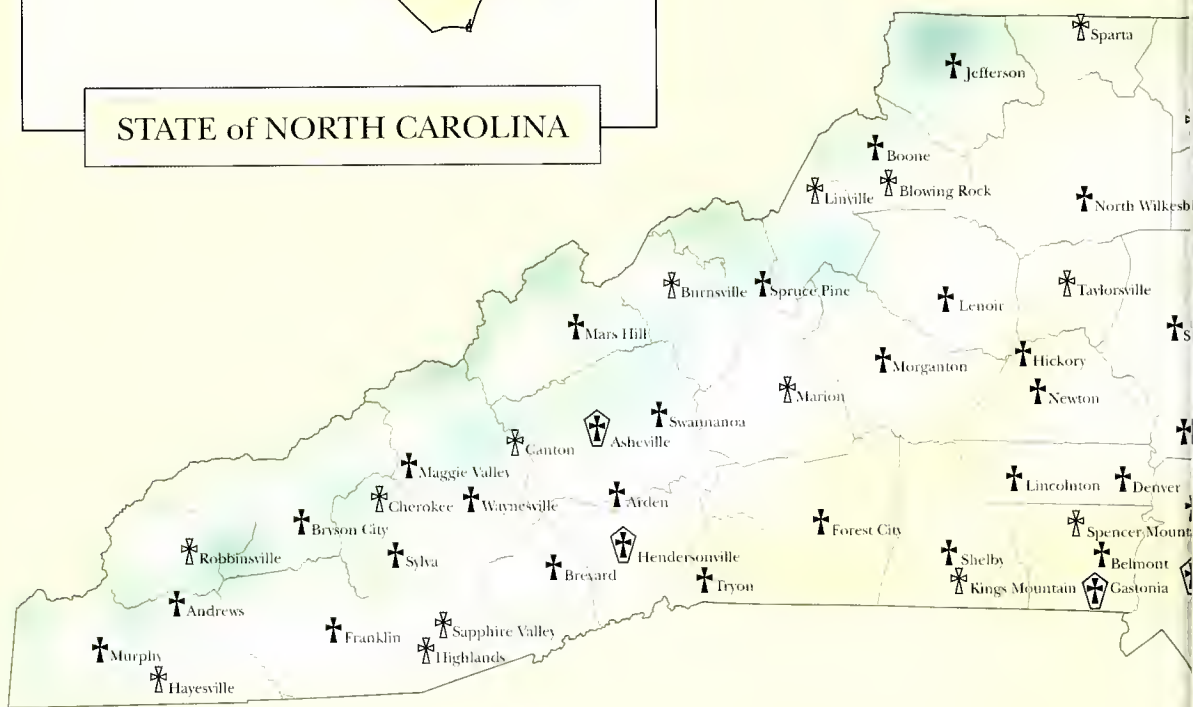
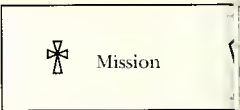
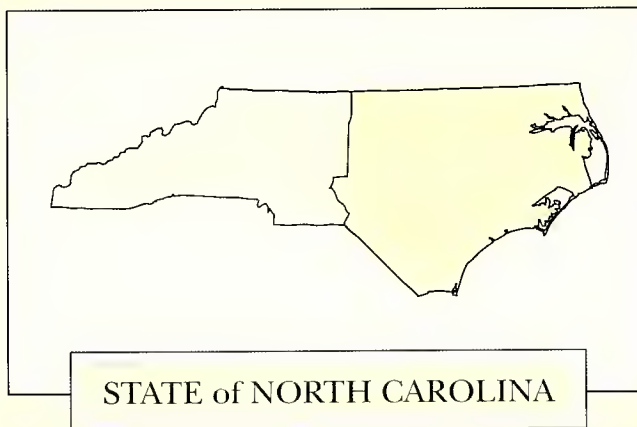
# *Voices and Places of The People of God*

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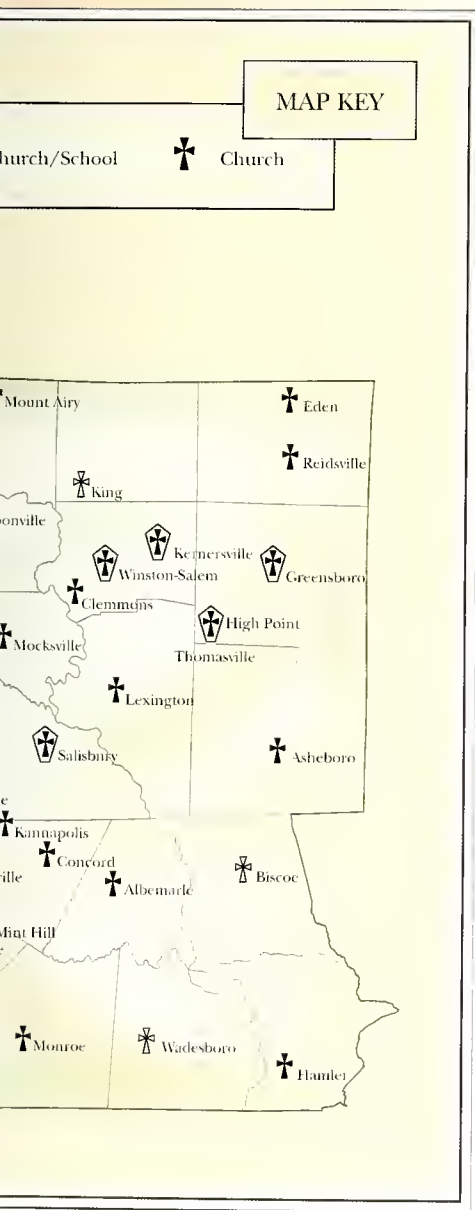


THE DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE

DAVID HAINS



ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE  
WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA



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## *My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:*



*As we celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of our diocese, I am pleased to present this book. It captures the history and spirit of our young diocese and presents beautiful pictures of the churches where the faithful gather.*

*The story of the Church in North Carolina goes back to the 1830s when priests on horseback roamed the small towns of the piedmont and the mountains, celebrating the Sacraments and bringing the Gospel message to the few Catholics who were scattered around the state.*



*In 1972, when Pope Paul VI created the Diocese of Charlotte, we were still few in number with about 35,000 Catholics spread throughout the 46 counties of the diocese. Today the number of faithful has grown nearly 10-fold to 300,000.*

*The story of our diocese is a blend of the voices from those people who can trace their ancestries to nearby towns as well as those who have come to Western North Carolina from the other side of the world. We may speak different languages and celebrate different customs, but we are united in our worship and service to the Lord and his Church here in North Carolina.*

*The strength of our Church comes from the grace of God to the people who serve Him. In the following pages you will hear from many of those servants through the stories they tell of their lives, the churches where they worship and their individual faith journeys.*

*I hope this book will inspire all of us to continue together to play a part in advancing the kingdom of God in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

*Sincerely yours in Christ,*

*+ Peter J. Jugis*

*Most Reverend Peter J. Jugis  
Bishop of Charlotte*



## FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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A brief story illustrates the purpose of this book. A young man who is a good friend to my son was involved in a terrible fall in the western part of North Carolina. His survival was in doubt and his family sent e-mails asking for prayers. My wife and I gladly obliged and even sent him a prayer shawl. The shawl was knitted by women at St. Mark Church in Huntersville. The women prayed as they created each loop, twist and purl, imbuing the shawl with a reservoir of thanks and adoration for the unknown supplications and warmth the shawl would later provide. Thankfully the young man recovered. A few months later he learned of a relative who was suffering from cancer. Knowing how much solace he had received from the prayer shawl, he sent it on. Sadly the relative died, but he asked to be buried with the shawl because it gave him comfort in his final days.



It is always wonderful to see how God uses something as mundane as a bit of cloth to touch so many lives. Great stories are like that, too, as they are passed around. Like a piece of cut crystal on a sunny day, every reading of a good story brings out a different color, a different emotion as the reader is touched in a new and beautiful way.

The idea that the people of the Diocese of Charlotte are filled with wonderful faith stories forms the basis of this book. This is not a history of the diocese. Sr. Miriam Miller, O.S.F, did a wonderful job with that in her 1984 book "A History of the Early Years of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte." While this book does contain some historical pictures and facts, the emphasis is more on the individual souls who contribute to daily worship life in the Diocese of Charlotte.

The stories and poems that appear in the following pages were selected from manuscripts solicited through an advertisement in "The Catholic News and Herald" during 2005. Other manuscripts were requested from contributors. Each can touch your heart and soul.

A project like this is a collaborative effort, and I would like to thank the following: Monsignor Mauricio West, Chancellor and Vicar-General of the diocese, who had the initial inspiration for a book to tell the story of Catholicism through the voices of, as the diocese mission statement puts it, "the people of God in Western North Carolina"; Cynthia Barnes, the archivist for the diocese, who gave me access to wonderful pictures, interesting information and worthy suggestions for the captions about our churches and schools; and two excellent proofreaders, Deborah Hains and Cindi Feerick, who both have sharp eyes for my mistakes.

We are a proud, diverse people who are part of an ancient Church. The faith stories, photographs and facts gathered here will, I hope, surprise, amuse and inspire you and, like the prayer shawl, provide comfort and assurance that the Holy Spirit is with us.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David Hains".

DAVID HAINS  
*Director of Communication*  
*Diocese of Charlotte*







# MIRACLE IN THE MAKING

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A 35-YEAR PERSPECTIVE OF THE DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE





## MIRACLE IN THE MAKING

### *A 35-Year Perspective of the Diocese of Charlotte*

A 14-year-old junior high school student planned to spend a lot of time in front of his family's black and white television on January 12<sup>th</sup> of 1972. History was being made at St. Patrick Cathedral in Charlotte and he was

going to watch it all and save it. In those pre-VCR days, "recording" a TV show meant using a bulky cassette player to capture only the audio. As the procession began for the ordination and installation of the new Bishop of Charlotte, the boy held a small microphone near the speaker on the TV set. Hundreds were packed into the church as a man who served as a priest in North Carolina since 1934

was ordained to be the first bishop. The new bishop, Michael J. Begley, was greeted with a thunderous round of applause when the ordination ended. The student, Peter Jugis, was thrilled.

The dramatic event at St. Patrick's actually began to take shape more than a year before. Bishop Vincent S. Waters of Raleigh, working alone and in secret, combed through the archives of his diocese. Bishop Waters was preparing the necessary documentation to present a case to Pope Paul VI. The diocese of Raleigh numbered 60,000 Catholics and Bishop Waters felt it was time to divide his large territory that covered all of North Carolina.

In November of 1971, Bishop Waters received word that the Diocese of Charlotte would be created. There was no fanfare, no great announcement and no press release. The bishop kept the information to himself. Two days before

Thanksgiving, he drove to Greensboro to meet with the pastor of Our Lady of Grace parish, Monsignor Michael Begley. Ostensibly the meeting was to discuss the Notre Dame High School in Greensboro.

Monsignor Joseph Showfety, the first Chancellor of the diocese, recalls what happened. "Bishop Waters and Monsignor Begley were driving toward the school when the bishop pulled over. 'I'm going to ask you a question. If you say "yes" I'll take it from there. If you say "no" you must never say a word about this conversation to anyone.'

"Intrigued but not surprised by the secrecy, Monsignor Begley wondered what the question was. 'Rome has decided to make Charlotte a diocese with you as the bishop,' said Bishop Waters. 'Do you accept?' The monsignor didn't hesitate and answered, 'Yes.' Bishop Waters simply put the car in gear and the bishop with the bishop-elect continued down the road."



*Pencil sketch of Bishop Michael Begley in the creation of an oil painting*



*Vincent S. Waters,  
Bishop of Raleigh*



*Bishop Michael Begley greets Pope Paul VI in an undated photo.*



*Monsignor Joseph Showfety, first Chancellor of the Diocese*

The establishment of a diocese is a complicated process that, among other things, involves the transfer of church property from one bishop to another. Monsignor Showfety recalls spending several days at the Department of Motor Vehicles in Raleigh transferring the titles of diocesan cars. "The police in that office asked me if I lived there," he recalls with a chuckle.

Monsignor Showfety says the division of assets between the old and the new diocese went very smoothly. In addition to the property, the priest retirement and seminarian funds were divided equally. "Bishop Waters was better to the Charlotte diocese than he was to his own."

Priests for the new diocese were "frozen" in place when the diocese was formed. Any priest of the Diocese of Raleigh who resided in the newly formed diocese became a priest of the Diocese of Charlotte.

The priests, the Bishop and others had to start a diocese from scratch in a little less than six weeks. With the Christmas holidays thrown in, it was a very busy time. Monsignor Showfety

credits his co-workers from the Diocese of Raleigh with providing invaluable counsel and practical suggestions as the new diocese was getting off the ground.

Those associated with the diocese at its beginning use words like "exciting" and "awesome" to describe what life was like. There was a pioneering sense of starting something new. The diocese was also small enough for most priests to know one another. Monsignor Joseph Kerin, who served as the second chancellor of the diocese, describes the atmosphere as friendly and informal. "There was a sense of a North Carolina spirit of the Church. The lay people and the priests had a sense that we were missionaries."

While there was a clear sense of mission and the sparkle that comes with being new, the diocese was cramped into a pair of rooms in the first floor of the rectory at St. Patrick Cathedral. Aloha Torrents, a longtime secretary in the office of the bishop and the chancery, recalls borrowing paper clips and typing paper from the rector of the cathedral. Torrents worked with Bishop Begley when he was the director of Catholic Social Services. "He asked me to be his secretary and I told him I didn't know how to be a secretary to a bishop. He laughed and told me, 'My dear child, only the office changes, not the man.'"



*An infant patiently waits in the Catholic Social Services office in Charlotte. 1970s*





*First Mass celebrated at Our Lady of Grace in Greensboro, 1952*

The offices of the diocese were cramped from the outset and it wasn't too long before it was obvious that larger quarters were needed. A small suite of offices on Buchanan Street near St. Patrick was used initially. In 1976 an office building on Morehead Street in Charlotte became available. Monsignor Showfety and Bishop Begley decided to take a look at it. Both men, having learned the benefits of secrecy from Bishop Waters, wore secular clothing to the initial meeting with the sellers to avoid identifying the Church as the prospective buyer.

The building was purchased a few weeks later and renovated for diocesan offices.

In 1979 Monsignor Showfety returned to full-time pastoral duties and the job of Chancellor was filled by Monsignor Joseph Kerin who oversaw the beginning of the transition of the diocese from a small outpost into a rapidly growing faith community that needed structural organization to meet the challenges presented by the growth.

A good example of how the diocese needed to change can be seen in the start-ups of two parishes, St. John Neumann and St. Matthew, both in Charlotte. Monsignor Lawrence Newman was the founding pastor of St. John Neumann. The diocese knew that a parish was needed on the east side of the city, but parish placement was more of an art than a

science. As Monsignor Showfety tells it, Monsignor Newman went door to door asking landowners if they would be willing to sell their property to the Church.

By the time St. Matthew was established, the diocese had a process in place for the location of a church and a full-time planner, Fr. Thomas Gaunt, S.J. who used population projections and other methods to determine where the people were living and where churches should be built. This more scientific approach was used for St. Matthew, which Monsignor Kerin says was originally referred to as Saint P & D, for Planning and Development.



*Monsignor Joseph Kerin as Chancellor of the Diocese*

The retirement plans for priests had been funded previously through the proceeds of an annual collection. In a small diocese, with younger priests, that approach was adequate.



*Bishop John Donoghue greets President George Bush in 1992.*

But as the priests aged, a more sophisticated solution was needed. "We established a committee made up of some older priests, some younger men and an insurance underwriter," said Monsignor Kerin, "and we separated the priests' retirement fund from other discretionary funds of the diocese."

Monsignor Kerin also describes the spiritual life of the diocese in the early 1980s as "very Vatican II." "We never had any problems in this diocese with the idea of ecumenism that was so much a part of Vatican II. In North Carolina you had to explain the Catholic faith all the time because there were so few of us."

That strong spiritual life in the diocese was what struck Bishop John F. Donoghue when he arrived in Charlotte in 1984 after the retirement of Bishop Begley. Bishop Donoghue spent the majority of his priestly career in administration in the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. He spent the first year in Charlotte traveling to all of the churches in what he would later call "the beautiful state of North Carolina" and listening to the priests and the people of the diocese.

Bishop Donoghue admits to having some pre-conceived notions about the South and expected to find some bigoted people here. It didn't work out that way. "I was amazed at how open everyone was to the Catholic Church," he said. "It changed my whole perception of the South."

For Aloha Torrents, who continued to work as the bishop's secretary, the first and the second bishops of Charlotte were a study in contrasts. "I was interviewed by Bishop Donoghue the night before the announcement was made that he would be the bishop. He was totally different from Bishop Begley. He (Begley) was a man who didn't worry about if he had a missing button or if his shoes weren't shined. Bishop Donoghue, on the other hand, always wore French cuffs. And I thought, he's not going to want to work with this girl from Tennessee, but he did and he was a wonderful man."



*First office building of the diocese, on Morehead St. in Charlotte. Previously the offices were located in the rectory of St. Patrick Cathedral.*

Bishop Donoghue was joined in the Chancery in 1986 by Monsignor John McSweeney. He succeeded Monsignor Kerin, who returned to pastoral duties at St. P & D, which now had the official name of St. Matthew. In 1974 Monsignor McSweeney had been the first priest to be ordained for the Diocese of Charlotte by the new Bishop Begley.

Both Bishop Donoghue and Monsignor McSweeney brought extensive administrative and business acumen to their leadership roles in the diocese.

Monsignor McSweeney was involved in a family funeral service and real estate business before answering a call to the priesthood. Both men recognized that the diocese needed to continue to evolve as both a spiritual and a corporate, or business, entity. "We saw a wave of people coming down South and we knew we had to prepare for it," said Monsignor McSweeney.

*Monsignor John McSweeney*





One of the many things Monsignor McSweeney focused on was the enormous growth that was taking place in the Charlotte area along Interstate 485, the road that rings the city. Land was purchased for new parishes, including St. Luke in Mint Hill and St. Mark in Huntersville.

At the same time, a diocese-wide pledge campaign was held to raise funds for the construction of the Catholic Conference Center near Hickory. Bishop Donoghue and his College of Consulters, a group of priests who advise the bishop, felt the conference center was needed to lower the costs of the many diocese-wide meetings that were taking place in more expensive settings like hotels. Since its completion, the Conference Center has hosted events like Marriage Encounter, Cursillo, diaconate training and Hispanic ministry events, to name a few. The center is also frequently used by other religious denominations.

In 1990 Bishop Donoghue began a spiritual quest in the diocese called the "Decade of Evangelization." He said, "Many dioceses around the country were pushing this idea of evangelization as a way to energize Catholics who were already strong in their faith, and at the same time, reach out to those who had fallen away from the faith." Bishop Donoghue combined evangelization with his passion for the Eucharist. He encouraged parishes to restore religious practices like 40 hours devotion, benediction and perpetual adoration. "Growing up as a kid, I remembered all of those things," he said. "It went out of vogue after Vatican II and I thought that was a loss. I wanted to see it restored and even wrote a pastoral letter supporting it. If we're going to really evangelize, then we have to make Christ the center of it all."

As the spiritual life of the diocese moved in an exciting direction, the administration of diocesan offices was changing. In 1972 the key positions in the chancery offices were held by clergy. As the diocese grew, these positions required more specialized knowledge.

Monsignor McSweeney, who served as the director of planning and development, later turned those duties over to lay people. The same was true for the supervision of Catholic schools and diocesan finances.

In June of 1993 Bishop Donoghue received a call from the papal nuncio to the United States telling him that the Holy Father wanted Bishop Donoghue to go to Atlanta. Not realizing that he was being asked to serve as the Archbishop of Atlanta, the stunned Bishop Donoghue asked the nuncio, "What for?" Replacing him in Charlotte would be a colleague from the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. Bishop William G. Curlin was installed as bishop in April of 1994.

Despite their common backgrounds, they brought different styles of leadership to the job of shepherd in Charlotte. Archbishop Donoghue spent most of his priestly career in the chancery of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., one-step removed from the pastoral duties of most priests. That separation, he says, allowed him to make decisions without undue emotional influence from a group or individual. He was more likely to act on the recommendation of a group of people. Bishop Curlin also based his decisions on the recommendations of organized groups. At the same time he spent much of his time in pastoral duties, especially the visitation of the sick.



*Bishop Curlin greets President George Bush.*



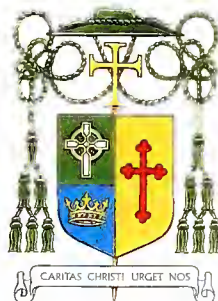
*Bishop Curlin celebrates Mass in the grotto at Lourdes, France, 2001*

"My telephone number was always in the book," Bishop Curlin explains in his softly accented Irish voice. "And I always shave at night, before I go to bed, and I lay out my clothes. That way if I get a call to visit someone who is sick, I'm ready to go."

Bishop Curlin based much of his ministry on the concept of poverty, both physical and spiritual, and the need to feed both kinds. "This is a prosperous diocese in many places, but there is poverty amidst the wealth as people hunger for God."

Bishop Curlin had first-hand experience with poverty, first as the pastor of a parish in a very poor neighborhood in Washington and later through his contact with Mother Teresa. His decades-long friendship with the little nun from Calcutta culminated in her visit to Charlotte in 1995 when she spoke to thousands of people at the Charlotte Coliseum and established a local community of the Missionaries of Charity Sisters.

Monsignor McSweeney left the chancery in 1994 for a missionary assignment. A desire for missionary work, he explains, was the original impetus for discerning a vocation. He was intrigued by the idea of being a part of a missionary diocese like Charlotte and later extended that vocation to the people of The Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul in the Virgin Islands. The job of Chancellor was assumed by Monsignor Mauricio West, or as everyone knows him, Father Mo. A diocesan priest from St. Gabriel Church in Charlotte, he had recently joined the diocese from the Monastery of Belmont Abbey where, among other things, he served as Vice-President for Student affairs at Belmont Abbey College.



*Coat of arms of Bishop Peter Jugis*



Bishop Curlin and Monsignor West both believed in building on the successful work of their predecessors, strategic planning, a greater role for the laity, a strong prayer life and what Monsignor West calls the radical goodness of God. "God is in control, I have faith in that," says Monsignor West. "There is going to be growth and challenge and since resurrection means dying, old structures are going to have to give way to new ones."



*Monsignor Mauricio West  
Chancellor and Vicar General,  
Diocese of Charlotte*

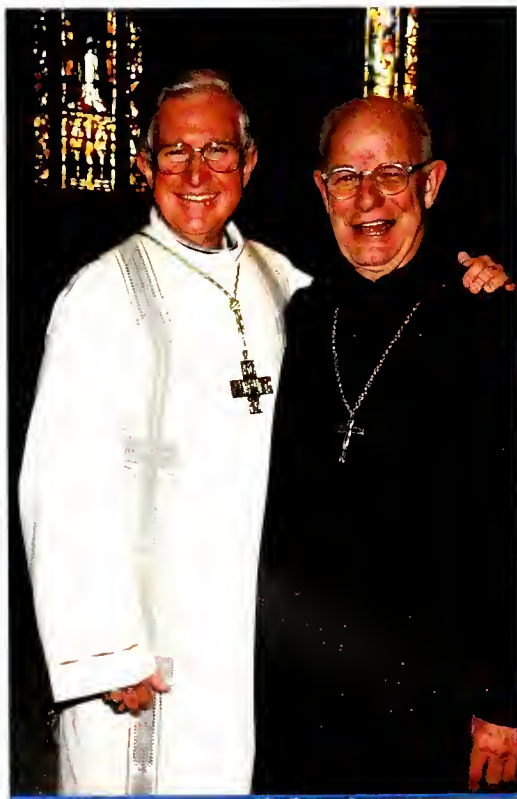
An example of this emphasis on strategic planning can be found in the way the diocese began to look formally at the issue of clergy sex abuse in the early 1990s, long before it exploded on the national consciousness in 2002. By 1995 the diocese

adopted a policy to deal with allegations and investigations of wrongdoing. In 2003 auditors from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops visited the diocese and made a commendation based upon the early adoption of the sex abuse policy.

Throughout its 35-year history, the diocese has been in constant flux between old and new. The new Diocese of Charlotte was created out of the older Diocese of Raleigh. The older-native Catholics of North Carolina watched as the number of the faithful swelled, first with transplants from the North and Mid-west and later with immigration from South and Central America, Vietnam and Korea. Each group of newcomers brought a set of customs and beliefs that praised God in ways the natives hadn't heard.

Bishop Curlin also sees the challenge between Catholics who find comfort in the older Latin rituals of the Church and those who grew up with the changes wrought by the Second Vatican Council. He described those changes as a tremendous blessing but said, "Many priests are worried that people will not be united. The challenges of the day are overwhelming, people are frightened. It is the bishop's job to bring both sides together and to know that when the problems are at their worst, the Church is at its best."

The junior high school student who held the microphone up to his TV set in 1972 is now Bishop Peter J. Jugis, a native of the diocese who was ordained and installed as the fourth bishop in October of 2003 after Bishop Curlin's retirement. The ordination took place at St. Matthew Church, a single parish with an estimated registered population of 14,000, a little less than half of the entire Catholic population of the diocese when it was founded in 1972.



*Bishop William Curlin and Abbot Oscar Burnett of  
Belmont Abbey*



Bishop Jugis, like Bishop Begley who baptized him in 1957, spent his priestly career in the parishes of the diocese. Bishop Jugis served in Winston-Salem, Reidsville, Salisbury, Belmont, Denver, Monroe, Huntersville and Charlotte. His views of the challenges facing the diocese in the future were forged in this experience. Like the bishops before him, he has traveled to the parishes of the diocese and listened to the concerns of the faithful. "What the people want is to know and understand their Catholic faith, and they want the Church to be courageous in professing this faith to the world."

For Bishop Jugis, the years since the second Vatican Council present the promise of a strong Church engaged with the modern world. "In every age of history, the Church has always drawn on the perennial wisdom of the faith to respond to the current needs and challenges. The Holy Spirit is accomplishing this again in our own day."



*Bishop Peter J. Jugis*

Bishop Jugis also faces the task of shepherding a Church that is welcoming into its diocesan family immigrants from Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe.

"These newcomers have a vibrant faith that contributes to the tradition of what was, until recently, an outpost of the Catholic faith. Those of us who grew up in the Diocese of Charlotte are grateful for these blessings. At the same time our history and faith are like a fertile field. Together we will sow and reap great things for our Lord."

While the Church will continue to have its challenges, Bishop Jugis says these will be met by joyfully living our faith in Christ.

Bishop Jugis sees the Diocese of Charlotte as being on a grand mission guided, as the whole Church has been for over 2000 years, by the love and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.



*Sister Larretta Rivera-Williams, R.S.M. (Center) and others at the Eucharistic Liturgy of the National Conference of Black Catholics held in the diocese in 2005*

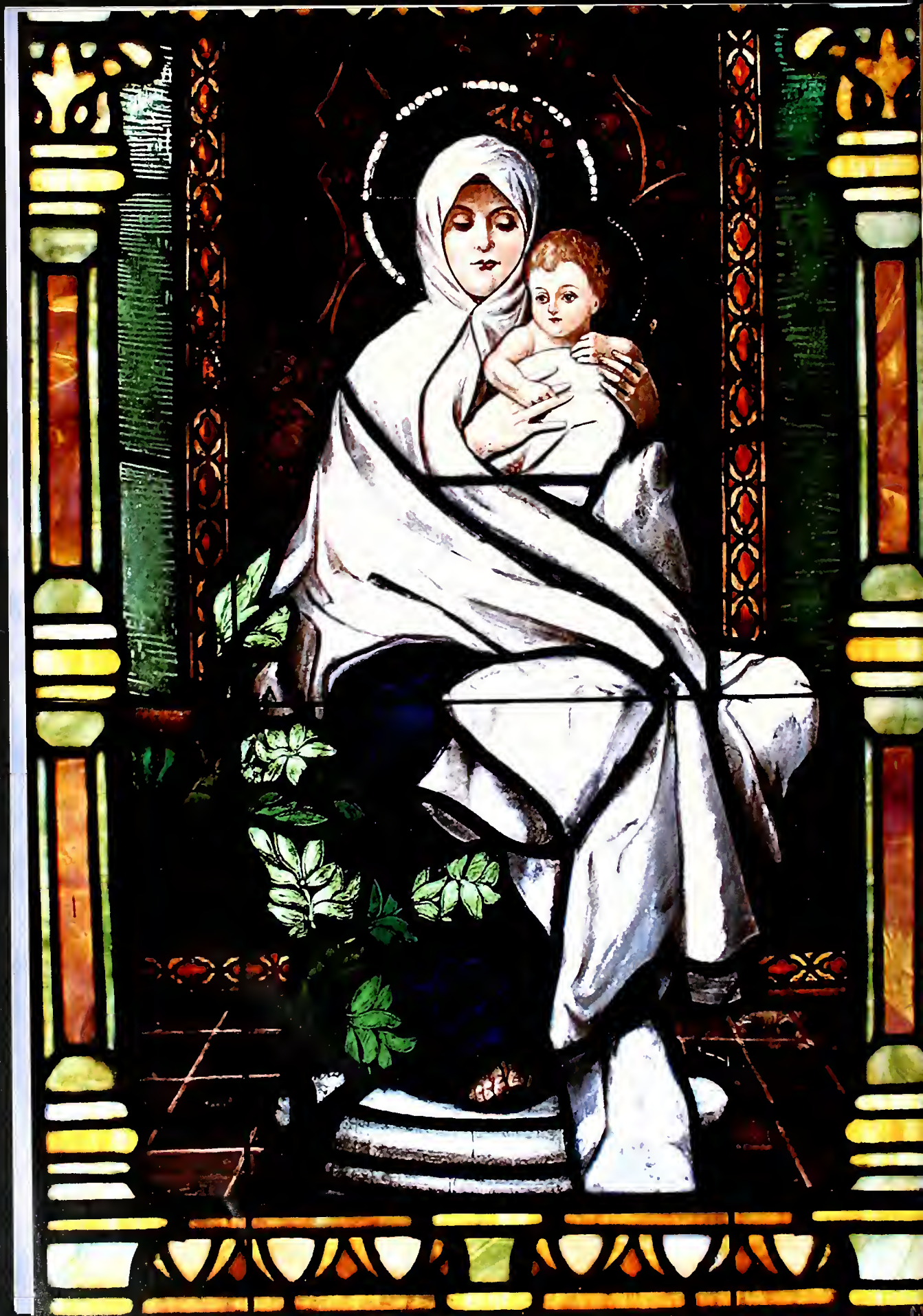
# NOTED EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE, NC

*1972-2005*

DATE	EVENT
January 12, 1972	Dioocese of Charlotte established by Pope Paul VI. Most Reverend Michael Joseph Begley consecrated as first Bishop of Charlotte.
1972	Saturday Vigil Mass approved.
1973	Bishop Michael Begley appointed Chair of the Catholic Committee on Appalachia.
1974	Office building on Morehead Street in Charlotte purchased for Diocesan Center, replacing offices in rectory of St. Patrick Cathedral.
February, 1975	Pastoral Letter, "This Land is Home to Me," is released. Written by Bishop Michael Begley, the letter is a call to action to give a voice to the oppressed and powerless people of Appalachia.
June 1975	First Diocesan Assembly takes place at St. Gabriel Church in Charlotte; 55 Parishes represented.
May 1976	Eucharistic Congress, Benton Convention Center, Winston-Salem.
1980	22 men begin classes at Sacred Heart College in Belmont to study for the first Permanent Diaconate program.
1983	First ordination of 19 Permanent Deacons.
June 1984	Bishop Michael Begley retires.
December 18, 1984	Monsignor John Francis Donoghue ordained and installed as second Bishop of Charlotte.
June 1986	Bishop John Donoghue becomes first Catholic bishop to address Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. He tells the assembly that churches should be more public in their demands for peace.
December 1988	Bishop John Donoghue dedicates the main building of the newly constructed Catholic Conference Center near Hickory.
January 1991	Bishop John Donoghue issues a statement calling for Catholics to join in prayer for a peaceful and just resolution to the crisis in the Persian Gulf.
November 1991	Pastoral Letter, "Life Has No Place for Active Euthanasia," written by Bishop John Donoghue. The letter expresses the Bishop's concern over the moral crisis that is created when euthanasia is deemed acceptable by society.
September 1992	"Letter from the Bishops to the People of the Province" published. The letter, which was signed jointly by Bishop John Donoghue; Archbishop James Lyke of Atlanta; and Bishops Joseph Gossman of Raleigh; Raymond Lessard of Savannah and David Thompson of Charleston, opposes the death penalty.
January 1993	Eight days after President Clinton takes the oath of office, Bishop John Donoghue writes an open letter, "We're Listening Mr. President, Are You?" The letter asks the President not to weaken laws which protect the unborn.

DATE	EVENT
June 1993	Bishop John Donoghue appointed Archbishop of Atlanta.
April 1994	Bishop William George Curlin installed as third Bishop of Charlotte.
1994	Female altar servers given official blessing.
1994	Diocese adopts "Policy of the Diocese of Charlotte Concerning Ministry-Related Sexual Misconduct by Church Personnel." Establishes Review Committee to advise bishop.
June 1995	Mother Teresa visits the Diocese of Charlotte, attends prayer service at the Charlotte Coliseum and establishes a religious house for sisters of the Missionaries of Charity.
October 1996	Evangelist Billy Graham holds four-day crusade in his hometown of Charlotte. The crusade was endorsed by the diocese and attended by Bishop Curlin and other priests.
January 12, 1997	Diocese of Charlotte celebrates 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Silver Jubilee.
September 5, 1997	Mother Teresa dies. Bishop William Curlin attends her funeral in Calcutta the following week as an official representative of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.
November 1997	"Of One Heart and One Mind," A Pastoral Letter to the Catholics of North Carolina by Bishop Curlin and Bishop Joseph Gossman of the Diocese of Raleigh. The letter addresses the issue of poverty.
February 9, 2002	Bishop Michael Begley dies.
June 2002	Diocese replaces 1994 sexual misconduct policy with "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People." Outside auditors commend diocese for its early proactive efforts to protect young people.
September 2002	Bishop William Curlin retires.
October 24, 2003	Bishop Peter J. Jugis consecrated as the fourth Bishop of Charlotte.
June 2004	1 <sup>st</sup> Annual North Carolina Black Catholic Conference.
August 2004	Pastoral Letter, "Worthy to Receive the Lamb," published. Written by Bishop Peter Jugis, Archbishop John Donoghue of Atlanta and Bishop Robert Baker of Charleston. The letter prohibits Catholic politicians and elected officials from receiving Communion if they support pro-abortion legislation.
December 31, 2004	Pastoral Letter, "A Journey of Peace and Hope," published. Written by Bishop Peter Jugis, it calls attention to the plight of poor people who immigrate to the US.
May 2005	Pastoral Letter, written by Bishop Peter Jugis, calls for an end to the death penalty.
August 2005	"Fiesta Con Jesus" day of worship and song celebrated by Hispanic Catholics in Charlotte.
September 2005	First Diocesan Eucharistic Congress held in Charlotte with theme of "Come Let Us Adore Him."







# PARISHES AND REFLECTIONS

DIocese OF CHARLOTTE



## WHO RUNS THE DIOCESE?

by

**ARCHBISHOP JOHN F. DONOGHUE**

Bishop of Charlotte 1984 – 1993

When I first came to Charlotte from Washington, D.C., it was after twenty years of working for some of the best and strongest men ever to be named bishop in the United States – Cardinal O'Boyle, Cardinal Baum and Cardinal Hickey. As those years passed, I truly believed that I would spend my life serving the Church out of the offices of the Archdiocese of Washington – and I was not unhappy believing this.

But then, in 1984, our late and beloved Holy Father, Pope John Paul II sent word that he wanted me to move to Charlotte, in North Carolina, and become a bishop of the Church in that diocese – only the second bishop in the history of the Charlotte diocese. It was a major change – for my entire life till then had been passed in and around Washington. My family was there, my friends and associates, and all those sights and sounds and welcome familiarities that define the place we call home, where we work to live in peace in an often troubled world.

But I believe in the Holy Spirit, and that through the Holy Father, the Spirit was telling me what His will for me would be. Now, I was to accept this great change, and go and serve Him in Charlotte. I came to the beautiful and gracious city, the jewel of western North Carolina, in December of 1984 and prepared to spend my first Christmas away from home – in my new home.

Very soon, I discovered that whatever skills I had attained over the years, the responsibilities now before me were daunting – even overwhelming. I can remember feverishly thinking to myself, "What can I do, what will I do, and how can I get it all done?" The Church in Charlotte and Western North Carolina was on the verge of explosive growth – conversions, people coming to live here from throughout our country and from abroad, and the natural growth of our indigenous population – things were ready to happen, they needed a manager, and I was it. But all

I could do was worry and wonder – traits not uncommon in a new bishop.

Then one day, not too long after I arrived, Bishop Michael Begley, the first bishop of Charlotte and the man who had ordained me to be the second bishop, dropped by the Catholic Center. He saw me in my office, came in and sat down for a visit. All who knew him remember what a humble but strong man of God Bishop Begley was. His appearance was what one might describe as the typical "country priest." There was nothing false about him, and vanity never found even the smallest crack in his character wherein to reside. I suppose that day Bishop Begley saw in my face the worries assaulting me, for he looked me straight in the eye and said: "Young man," – I was 56 at the time – "young man, what you have to realize is that you don't run the Church – the Holy Spirit runs the Church. Now, what you have to do is step aside and let Him get on with it."

I took Bishop Begley's advice – I never forgot it, and I still live by those words. It didn't mean less work – in fact, it meant more. For after that talk I no longer thought of myself as a boss, but as a first assistant. And soon, to my relief, I learned that here in this wonderful and beautiful state of North Carolina, and here in this warm and hospitable local Church we call the Diocese of Charlotte, I would discover a wealth of support, and a richness of friends – priests, sisters, deacons, lay men and women, all dedicated to the message of Christ, the Holy Gospel, as it is lived every day by our beloved Catholic Church. They were all to become my fellow assistants, and though my hand was on the helm and theirs were manning the tackle and sails, it was the Holy Spirit who provided the wind and determined the course we would sail together.

For ten years, I did the joyous work of being Bishop of Charlotte. I was so happy doing it that when the Apostolic Nuncio called me in 1993 to tell me that the Holy Father wanted me to go to Atlanta, my immediate and innocent response was, "What



for?" I had never thought I would ever leave Charlotte and, to this day, there is in me a degree of regret that it became necessary.

But I did leave, and left my beloved North Carolina diocese in the hands of a man whom I could trust to carry on – Bishop William Curlin, a long-time friend and fellow priest from Washington. It was my pleasure over the next eight years, until his retirement, to work closely with Bishop Curlin as an associate bishop of the Southeastern Province and to see, under his care, what I had done in Charlotte and my hopes for the diocese grow even further and her people advance in spiritual stature. Then, in 2003, I had the great honor and pleasure to ordain the fourth Bishop of Charlotte – a native son, and one of the finest priests I have ever known – Bishop Peter Jugis. I remember that at Bishop Jugis' installation, I saluted him with these words: "You are a man for the

times and for the place. Your heart, your soul, your roots are here in the hills and plains of North Carolina."

On that day, Bishop Jugis was all of 46 years old – ten years younger than I was when I came to Charlotte – and now I was 75, the age when bishops send the Holy Father their resignations, in obedience to the law of the Church and in obedience to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. It had all come full circle – and woven together in ways too special to be random, too holy to be unplanned. Begley to Donoghue to Curlin to Jugis – priests of Washington, priests of North Carolina, but each a man of his time and place, and all, whether born or adopted, loving servants of God's people and His Church on earth – and especially that place on earth so dear to us all – the hills and plains of North Carolina and the Diocese of Charlotte.



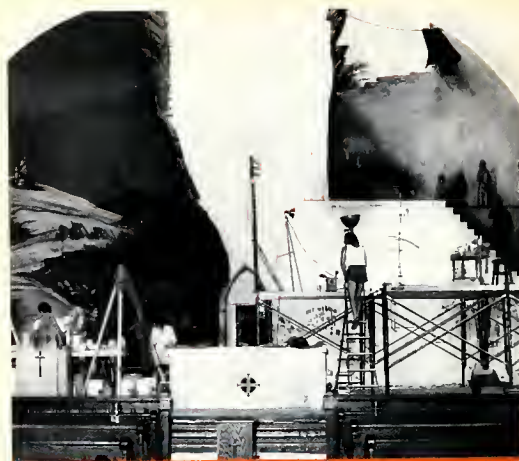
*St. Peter Church interior, Charlotte. Stained glass*





## St. Peter

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1852



*Artists mix paint for fresco depicting the Passion of the Lord, 1989. The fresco fell during construction of a nearby building in 2002.*



*The cornerstone for the original St. Peter Church was laid in 1851. The building cost \$1,000. The present church was constructed in 1893. Over the years a school and a hospital were located on the property.*



*St. Peter interior  
Stained glass*





# *Basilica of St. Lawrence*

ASHEVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1866



*St. Lawrence was designed by the Spanish architect Rafael Guastavino, who came to Asheville in the 1890s during the construction of the nearby Biltmore House. The architect Stanford White helped with the church's design after Guastavino died. Pope John Paul II designated the church the Basilica of St. Lawrence in 1993.*







# *St. James the Greater*

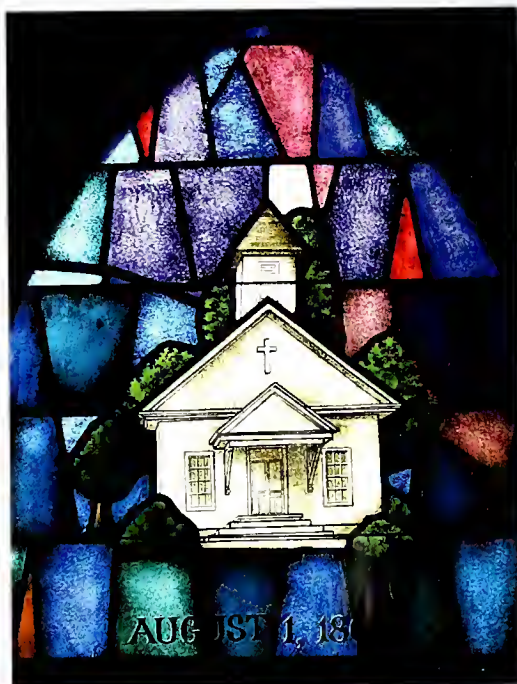
CONCORD, ESTABLISHED 1869



*St. James the Greater was founded in 1869 in Concord. Bishop Peter Jugis dedicated the present church in December of 2004.*



*The monument to the unborn erected by the Knights of Columbus.*



## POWER OF FAITH

by  
**REVEREND JOHN C. AURILIA, OFM.CAP., PH.D.**  
Pastor, Immaculate Conception Church, Hendersonville

I love Sunday, because in the morning I have the privilege to minister to hundreds of people at Immaculate Conception Church in Hendersonville. The morning services are followed by an afternoon of well-earned relaxation.

Late one Sunday afternoon in 1998, I witnessed the "power of faith" in action as I was walking back and forth in our new church. While admiring its majesty and beauty, I noticed a man rummaging through the rubble and debris on the site of the old church. He bent down to pick up a rock, looked at it, kissed it and then looking at the new church with a prayerful smile, made the sign of the cross. No words were uttered because that powerful moment could not be expressed in words.

At that moment the statement of Jesus came alive: "And on this rock I will build my church." From that time on, many happy memories got stuck in my mind, like Bishop William Curlin's 1998 dedication of the church, the wonderful singing, the joy of our community celebrating a new birth.

But the stone kissed by the old man will always have a special importance till the day I die. That simple gesture of kissing an old stone brought me back to the 1900s when a few Catholics in Hendersonville decided to have a house of worship. Our parish history tells us "five or ten people gathered on Sunday to pray, waiting for the priest, who was coming from Asheville, riding a horse. Their collection was \$.25 in wintertime and up to \$.50 in summertime."

The miracle of faith has become a reality in our diocese. The man kissing the rock from the old

church has a great faith in the past and a great blessing for the present. Faith needs both past and present to make a meaningful future. The power of faith can only be felt, not necessarily expressed in words.

It is a scientific truth that "when a magnet picks up a paper clip, it defeats the gravitational pull of the entire earth." If you are the paper clip, it is not so bad to be drawn to something so powerful. The words of Jesus were true twenty-one centuries ago, and they are true today: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches." (Mt.13:31-32)

That seed already had the history of the past, the treasure of the present, and the dreams of the future. What was future is now present, what was present is now past, and we are holding all three of them as we learn from yesterday, live today and shape tomorrow.

I believe that the power of faith in our community is more like the gift of presence rather than a supernatural gift. I really don't know where the dreams end and reality begins. We can never set limits to our dreams or limit our reality. We make history every day by letting the tree grow so our frontiers will be as unlimited as the sky above and the magnificent gift of nature around us. In the garden of life, where trees grow and flowers bloom, every seed will make history and our frontiers are beyond the stars of our dreams.



## A CENTERING PRAYER

by

MARY C. VORLICEK

Immaculate Conception, Hendersonville

**M**y practice of centering prayer began when I moved from Pennsylvania to the mountains of North Carolina in 2002.

My day begins, but not quite in the way I had expected. It is an ordinary day in late August, a day that brings a cooling breeze and temperature to my favor. Out my window a yellow butterfly has just discovered a neon pink flower. The dogwoods, having taken on the color of autumn, appear tiny in contrast to the towering pines. I'm in a quiet, reflective mood, about to share my faith journey toward centering prayer. But, I'm just not quite comfortable. I'm seated at a brand new drafting table and it's too high. Not knowing how to adjust the height, I stand and push down on a foot lever. Nothing happens. So gently I lift the lever and "WHAM," everything flies off the table. My candle, my Bible, my notebooks, extra paper, pens and pencils, a glass of water and ice cubes all thrown across my studio! Was it a disaster? No. It was a challenge, an opportunity.

My thoughts travel to another time, an angry time, a frustrating time, my time before centering prayer. I know that I have changed. I wanted to change. You gave me the desire. Now, I simply say, Lord you have my attention. What is your will?

Do you want me to write about the gifts you have given to me: my newly found patience, my inner peace, the joyful love discovered in the silence? That I truly know you are the living God, a merciful God? That you lead me to your eternal truths through the Scriptures daily? That, moment to moment, you are in my life at the center of my being?

I remember the time when I didn't know how to quiet myself. On the day I was full of questions, your answer led me to silence. Write down your thoughts, you said. I will guide you. All inspiration is gifted through me. Light your candle and begin.

In faith I lit the candle.  
I am transfixed by its light.  
The candle burns down slowly.  
The day has not yet begun.

Am I up too late, or am I  
up too early?

There is a flutter  
as the draft in the room  
finds its way  
between night and day.

The flame pulsates,  
then burns steadily.

I feel that I have forgotten something.

There is such a constant  
insistence in the flame.

A vigil forgotten?

Please give me a glimmer  
of what it is.

My pen asks to make  
it noteworthy.

Do not quiver now little glow,  
continue your silent oration.

If this is about something, tell me.  
I want to know.

I have personified you in verse.

I notice that you now pivot  
on the edge of extinction.

Your brightness is fading.  
Don't go!

My child, let me speak.

Quiet now, allow me to lead you.

You are to become silent.

You are in silence to listen.

Your gaze at me, hypnotically  
transfixed, is still of this world.

Follow me, I am a burning reminder.

Focus your vision on my flame.

It is the symbol of the path  
to your journey inward.

My fire is of the Spirit, Holy.

My light will guide you  
to the inner caverns of your soul  
where your Father sits in wait.

Let us go now and travel the  
path of silence  
to your God.



# Immaculate Conception

HENDERSONVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1869



*The present Immaculate Conception Church was dedicated by Bishop William Curlin in 1998. Cornerstones, stained glass windows and even one wall of the new church came from church buildings dating back to 1912.*



*Immaculate Conception  
old church*

## *Immaculate Conception*

### *Stained glass:*

ON THE LEFT: *Pope John Paul II with Mother Teresa*

ON THE RIGHT: *The boy Jesus in the Temple with the teachers and Joseph and Mary*







## *St. Philip the Apostle*

STATESVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1870



*A chapel built in 1898 at the corner of Sharpe and Trade Streets in Statesville was the original house of worship for St. Philip the Apostle. The chapel was built in memory of Philip Barton Key, a descendant of Francis Scott Key, author of "The Star Spangled Banner."*







# *St. Benedict*

GREENSBORO, ESTABLISHED 1877



*St. Benedict is the mother church of five Greensboro parishes.*

## A SPIRITUAL QUEST

by

**FATHER JOHN PUTNAM**

Pastor, Sacred Heart, Salisbury

Growing up as a Southern Baptist in western North Carolina, I didn't even know what a Catholic was until I was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. At that point I remember seeing a very frail Pope Paul VI on television. Later, in 1978 there was a great deal of "Catholic" coverage because of the deaths of Paul VI and John Paul I and the election of John Paul II. I remember being almost mesmerized by everything I was seeing. The Catholic liturgy was very foreign to me since the Baptist worship service is so simple; yet, there was something that attracted me a great deal.

When I began high school I also began a spiritual quest. For some time there had been something missing inside me. I visited a lot of different churches with friends and then, for a time, really didn't participate in any church. I remembered my attraction to things Catholic though, so I wrote the pastor of St. Aloysius in Hickory a letter. Apparently he never received my first letter and, being a rather persistent young man, I wrote another. With the second letter I received a response and the pastor, Monsignor Eugene Livelsberger, invited me to come see him at St. Aloysius. I did a great deal of volunteer work at the local hospital which was only a few blocks from the Catholic church, so one day my mother dropped me off at the hospital and, as soon as the car was out of sight, I headed down the street to St. Aloysius. Monsignor Livelsberger was the first priest that I had ever met. He invited me into his office, asked a few questions, handed me a book to study and told me to be at Mass on Sunday. I said, "Yes, Father" and the rest is history.

My transition to the Catholic Church was not an easy one. My father was born in the North Carolina mountains and raised at the Baptist orphanage in Thomasville. My mother's family was Methodist, and she began attending the Baptist church when she married my father. Needless to say, they had many misconceptions about Catholics and the months between my formation beginning and my initiation into the Church were a bit bumpy. During

the course of that time, however, my parents had a crisis in their lives and no one to talk to. I suggested they speak with the Monsignor. Reluctantly they agreed and, after they recovered from realizing that he really did not have horns and a tail, they began to develop a very different view of Catholics and the Church. My parents were there for my baptism on my 16<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1981, and, for the most part, they have been very supportive ever since.

When I decided to pursue the priesthood, my mother said that she really was not that surprised. They always wanted me to be a doctor and to attend Bowman Gray School of Medicine at Wake Forest. On one trip home from seminary, I was driving my mother to North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem. As we approached the hospital on the highway, she commented that she had always thought that she would see me there in a white coat. I smiled at her and simply said, "That's true Mom, but at least I will have a white collar!" She never said another word. Obviously she was at peace with my decision.



*Two children place a crown on the Blessed Virgin in May of 2004.*



# *Sacred Heart*

SALISBURY, ESTABLISHED 1882



*Sacred Heart Church built in 1882. Salisbury Catholics first gathered for Mass in the 1830s.*







# St. Mary

SHELBY, ESTABLISHED 1884



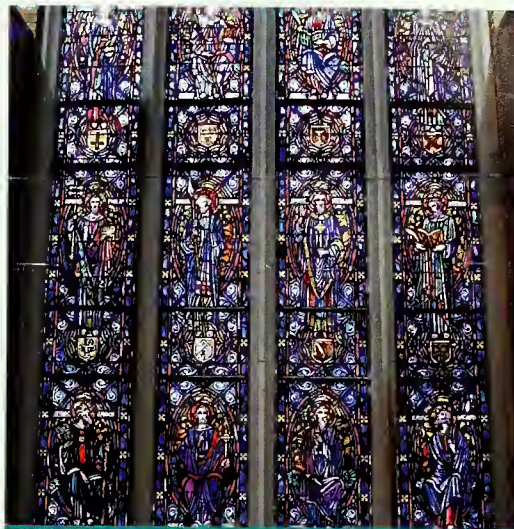
*St. Mary Church in Shelby was established originally as a mission of St. Michael Church in Gastonia.  
St. Mary attained parish status in 1939.*





# St. Leo the Great

WINSTON-SALEM, ESTABLISHED 1891



*Benedictine Monks of Belmont Abbey began celebrating Mass in the homes of Winston-Salem Catholics in the 1880s. The cornerstone of the present church was laid in 1928.*



BELMONT ABBEY COLLEGE LIBRARY





# *St. Michael the Archangel*

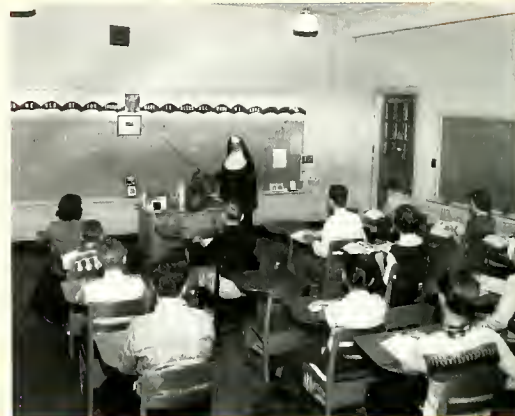
GASTONIA, ESTABLISHED 1903



*St. Michael the Archangel, Tabernacle*



*St. Michael the Archangel, Baptismal pool*



*Sr. Mary Celestine leads a class in this undated photo probably from the 1970s.*



*Students at St. Michael learn teamwork in a three-legged race. (Undated)*

*St. Michael the Archangel Church was founded in 1902 by the monks of Belmont Abbey. Catholic construction workers involved with Gaston County's then-booming textile industry asked for the church, which was built when Saint Katherine Drexel of Philadelphia made a donation of \$1,500.*





## HOMILY FOR MOTHER TERESA

by  
BISHOP EMERITUS, WILLIAM G. CURLIN  
September 8, 1997 Memorial Mass

Cardinal Newman once wrote on the occasion of the death of a beloved friend: "There are feelings in my soul too deep to express in words." I can identify with his sentiments this evening as we remember in prayer one whom we revere and love as a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

I met Mother Teresa thirty years ago when I served as pastor of St. Mary Mother of God Church in Washington. When I was assigned as its pastor, the parish neighborhood was very poor. Crime was almost a daily occurrence. My Archbishop, Cardinal O'Boyle, arranged for me to meet Mother Teresa of Calcutta. The Cardinal wanted Mother to open a home to serve the poor in the nation's Capitol. That was the beginning of my friendship with Mother Teresa. During the following years, Mother Teresa invited me to direct retreats for her and her religious community in the United States, India and Rome. Our meetings and exchange of letters provided opportunities to deepen our friendship.

When I was appointed by Pope John Paul II in 1994 to serve as the Bishop of Charlotte, Mother Teresa offered to bring her sisters to Charlotte. Many will remember the ecumenical prayer service in the Charlotte Coliseum on June 13, 1995 when we welcomed Mother Teresa and her sisters to the Diocese of Charlotte. She moved our hearts with her words: "As Jesus was sent by His Father, we too are sent by Him, filled with His spirit to be witnesses of His Gospel of Love and Compassion."

Tonight we come as a family, not to weep but to rejoice, for death has brought Mother Teresa the victory of eternal life promised by Jesus Christ to all who die in His love.

I do not feel the need to recount the whole history of Mother's life but only the highlights. We have read of her childhood and her later entrance into the religious community of the Sisters of Loretto. It was as a member of this community that she went to India to teach in one of their schools.

It was during my first visit to Calcutta that Mother Teresa described an almost mystical experience.

She was traveling on a train and watching the endless line of poor people standing along the tracks. Suddenly she heard a voice within her telling her to dedicate her life to the service of the poorest of the poor. With the permission of her religious superiors, she left the security of her religious community and entered the world of Calcutta's poor. There she discovered an elderly woman abandoned in a pile of garbage. She later found a dying man whose body bore the attacks of rats. Both had nowhere to go and no one to help them. Mother Teresa boldly challenged the city authorities to do something to help such desperately ill people. She begged for a place where she might offer them a home, and more importantly, offer them love. The rest of her story is history!

This evening I would like to speak of the mission of love that empowered the life of Mother Teresa, for on many occasions, when admired for her social ministry of caring for the world's poor, she would immediately respond: "We are not social workers. We are contemplatives who live in God's presence. It is His love within our hearts that drives us into the service of the poor." I quote her words: "As Jesus was sent by His Father, we too are sent by Him, filled with His spirit to be witnesses of His Gospel of love and compassion in our apostolate among the poorest of the poor all over the world."

You and I live in a world of poverty! I do not refer only to material poverty but to a worse poverty - the poverty within the human heart. On several occasions Mother Teresa described the absence of God within the soul as the greatest illness on earth. It destroys all hope to live. It robs us of the ability to reach out to those around us when love demands taking risks in helping others.

For Mother Teresa there was no child, woman or man on earth who was unlovable. When criticized for embracing lepers and people with AIDS, she reminded us that we, and not God, created "untouchables." Too often we are tempted to turn our backs on people who are "not like us." We distinguish between good and bad - and act accordingly. Some people are treated like clean or

soiled linen. But Mother Teresa followed the teaching of the Man from Galilee, who taught us that He lives in every person on earth, especially "the least of our brethren."

Our world needs to embrace the philosophy of Jesus. Too often we see evidence of the divisions that tear apart the human family. For some there is the temptation to attack those whose lives are not in accord with our own. If Jesus had made that distinction, the woman caught in adultery would have died by stoning, and Mary Magdalene's tears in washing Jesus' feet would never have won her pardon. Mother Teresa taught us the distinction between pity and compassion. We can pity someone and still hold him or her in contempt. Compassion invokes feelings that demand action in helping our neighbor.

I remember Mother telling me of the anger and threats she received when she first opened her home for the dying in Calcutta. One day an official came to close her home. When he saw her bathing lepers and dressing their wounds, he told the angry mob outside her home, "I will close her home when some of you bathe the lepers and dress their wounds." Ten years later I recalled those words when I visited families in a community where Mother Teresa wished to establish a home for people dying with AIDS. Compassion for the dying was sometimes lacking. The same was true when trying to establish a shelter for homeless women and children. "Not in our neighborhood" was the response by some.

Recently Mother Teresa was questioned for opening a home for prostitutes. In support of her home, she spoke of the demands of love. Everyone, no matter who they are or whatever their illness, is a child of God. She reminded us, "Do not judge and you will not be judged." She dared to be a mother to all who are motherless on earth!

Great faith is not required for a kind deed. It is not too difficult to perform an act of charity, but to spend a lifetime of day-after-day binding up the world's wounds requires heroic love. Mother Teresa possessed heroic love!!

Where did she find her strength and courage? She believed that from the moment of baptism, Jesus lived within her. She nourished that interior life of

the Spirit through prayer, Eucharist and the sacramental life of the Church. She professed that God "wrote love letters to His poor" on earth using her as His pencil." Hers was a simple faith that accepted and lived the Gospel without compromise! She believed that our hands and hearts are the hands and hearts of Jesus when we use them in service to our neighbor - be they friend or stranger. She understood the words of Chesterton: "The Gospel hasn't failed. We have failed to try it as Jesus taught it." There was never any compromise in Mother's loyalty to the teachings of Christ. She never tested the winds of popularity. She feared no criticism nor sought any popularity. The Gospel of Love given us by Jesus Christ was her life.

Some have already questioned if her ministry to the poor will now fade away. Will her sisters, who serve the poor in almost every nation, now decline without her leadership and inspiration? Some years ago, I asked her that same question. She gave a simple response: "We only exist to serve God's purpose. When we have finished the work He gave us to do, we will fade away. Our mission to the poor is dependent upon God and not upon ourselves."

Mother Teresa has left us. Her religious community of sisters will continue her work here under the leadership of her successor. In Charlotte we are blessed with the presence of her sisters who are prepared to continue her mission. Yet, what is needed is our own pledge to continue Mother's service to the poor and needy. We cannot ask her sisters to do what we refuse to do.

The Charlotte community often boasts of its increasing prosperity. Yet, major problems exist within our community; we cannot hide or disguise them. Many families are in crisis. Parents fear the destruction of young lives by alcohol or drugs. Racism continues to divide us as a community. Prejudice rejects those born in other nations. Even public officials debate the equality of citizenship. We might be tempted to shrug our shoulders and say: "Why bother? What can one person do?" I disagree. All we need do is look at the singular life of Mother Teresa of Calcutta and see how the world has been changed for the better.

One person filled with faith and love can make a difference!



# *St. James the Greater*

HAMLET, ESTABLISHED 1910



*The new St. James Church in Hamlet replaced the church that was built in 1910. The new church was dedicated by Bishop John Donoghue in November of 1989.*





## BISHOP MICHAEL J. BEGLEY A MAN OF JUSTICE WITH A HEART FOR APPALACHIA

by  
JOSEPH PURELLO

Director, Office of Justice and Peace, Diocese of Charlotte

In 1973, one year after being installed as the first Bishop of Charlotte, the Most Reverend Michael J. Begley accepted an additional leadership role as the Chair of the Catholic Committee on Appalachia (CCA). Through this role, he sought to deepen the Church's solidarity with the poor and powerless in Appalachia by launching the writing of a joint pastoral letter on Appalachia, "This Land is Home to Me."

Agreeing to such a role, while also leading a fledgling diocese, demonstrates the concern Bishop Begley had for the people of Appalachia. Archived letters from Bishop Begley to his brother bishops in late 1973 reveal his passion for a pastoral letter on Appalachia and his zeal in getting his brother bishops to support the idea. His leadership of the CCA, his personal solicitation of support for the pastoral letter from the other Catholic bishops of Appalachia, and his profound belief that such a pastoral letter was needed, contributed greatly to "This Land is Home to Me" becoming a reality.

Most Reverend Walter F. Sullivan, Bishop Emeritus of Richmond, spoke about Bishop Begley's role in the writing and promulgation of "This Land is Home to Me" at the Bishop Begley Conference on Appalachia in October 2003. As one of the 25 bishops who, along with Bishop Begley, signed "This Land is Home to Me" in 1975, Bishop Sullivan recalled firsthand the energy, enthusiasm and commitment of Bishop Begley: "He [Bishop Begley] was the one who took on the mantle of the Appalachian scene from Bishop Joe Hodges of Charleston, West Virginia. Those who want to work in Appalachia, to become involved, must come to learn, and come to listen. That's what Bishop Begley did. He came to be part of the people, to be steeped in the spirit of the mountains, and so to be a listening presence which is so very important."

Sr. Beth Davies, CND from Pennington Gap, Virginia, served on the CCA task force that worked with Bishop Begley in drafting the pastoral letter. At the October 2003 conference, she spoke about how Bishop Begley connected with the people of Appalachia, including church workers in that region. "Through his listening presence, Bishop Begley soon discovered the direct connection between the human story and the land on which the story occurs. He intuited an intimacy between people and the very soil from which they come. His interest in people's lives became significant because it showed people that their history is valuable, their stories unique, and the community which houses those traditions is worth preserving. His listening stance carried over to his early conversations with mountain church workers....With the promulgation of the pastoral letter, these workers now had a beacon, a license to work for justice with the knowledge that "This Land is Home to Me" authenticated their work - joining them in common purpose with the Catholic leadership of the region and establishing the legitimacy of their efforts."

Bishop Begley announced the promulgation of the pastoral letter at a press conference at Wheeling Jesuit College in February 1975. Within 12 weeks, over 65,000 copies of "This Land is Home to Me" had been distributed nationally and abroad. The letter inspired many religious and laity to go to Appalachia and assist in works of charity and justice.

Sr. Beth Davies also recalled a Brazilian bishop who said "This Land is Home to Me" with its theme of giving voice to the oppressed and powerless resonates in lands outside of Appalachia. It is the only document from North American bishops that is widely read in Latin America. She also noted that at least four universities in the United States incorporated the letter into their American studies programs.

Renewing the Earth, a 1977 collection of the Church's major social documents, called "This Land is Home to Me" the finest contemporary American document on social justice. According to Bishop Sullivan, Bishop Begley's efforts with the pastoral letter are also significant because it was the first time that a group of U.S. bishops worked together on a regional statement outside of the national conference of Catholic bishops.

One Kentucky newspaper editorial (as shared by Sr. Beth Davies) stated, "'This Land is Home to Me' is a unique and poetic statement that should be read by every individual born of and heir to the joys and sorrow of the region. One does not have to be Catholic to realize that the letter speaks truth to the poor and powerless, no matter what their religious loyalties."

Bishop Begley's work on "This Land is Home to Me" was by no means the extent of his work for justice in Appalachia or for social justice in general. He served as a mediator in labor-management disputes, including a 1974 miners' strike in Evarts, Kentucky, and he publically supported textile union members in a national boycott in the late 1970s. In 1985, as Bishop Emeritus, he participated with Bishop John F. Donoghue on a tour of Appalachia marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of "This Land is Home to Me."

In 1984, inspired by his work as a labor-management mediator and by Pope John Paul's 1981 encyclical "Laborem Exercens, (On Human Work)," Bishop Begley promulgated the pastoral letter "The Workbench of Life: A Dialogue of Church, Labor and Management in the Diocese of Charlotte," written after almost two years of dialogue, listening sessions, and visitations.

Late in his life, Bishop Begley reflected on his years of ministry in North Carolina, including his experiences in Appalachia: "I came to know Appalachian families and the struggles they faced. I was moved by their spirit and humbled by their poor existence. I had a clearer understanding of the need for the Church to reach out to all people, especially the poor."

In 1999, the Office of Economic Opportunity/Catholic Social Services (OEO/CSS) opened in Murphy, NC, offering programs that seek sustainable development, family empowerment and economic justice in far western North Carolina. There certainly is no more fitting name for the building in which OEO/CSS is housed than the Bishop Begley Center for Economic Development.

*Bishop Michael Begley talks with coal miners on one of his frequent trips to Appalachia. (undated)*







## *St. John the Baptist*

TRYON, ESTABLISHED 1911



*The original St. John the Baptist Church was constructed in 1911. On June 25, 1959 – just a day after the feast of St. John the Baptist – the church burned. With help from the local community, the parish immediately set out to build a new spiritual home. Gifts of money, materials and labor arrived from the area and from across the country.*

*With a contribution from the Catholic Extension Society, construction began in January 1962.*

*The new church was dedicated in August of 1962.*

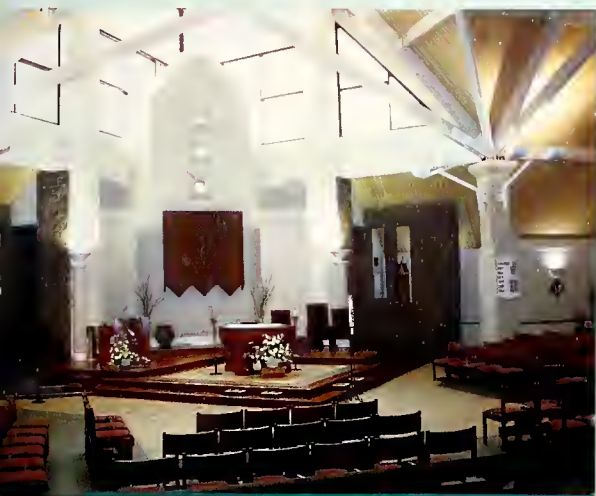






# St. Aloysius

HICKORY, ESTABLISHED 1913



*On April 18, 1915, Bishop Leo Haid came to Hickory to dedicate a former Seventh Day Adventist Church as the new St. Aloysius Catholic Church. The \$1,500 used to purchase and improve the property came from Dr. Joseph Kelly of Philadelphia, who made the grant to further Catholicism in North Carolina.*







# Holy Angels

MOUNT AIRY, ESTABLISHED 1921



*Holy Angels Church was constructed with white granite native to Surry County. Bishop Leo Haid of Belmont Abbey dedicated the church in 1921.*







# St. John the Evangelist

WAYNESVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1926



*As a mission church in the 1930s, St. John the Evangelist served 70 Catholics in an area the size of Ireland. Mass attendance rose during the summer tourist months and a church was erected in 1941.*



*Children and teacher enjoy music at St. John School in Waynesville. (undated)*





## CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN THE MOUNTAINS

by

SISTER MARY TIMOTHY WARREN, R.S.M.

Vicar for Women Religious

Saint Joan of Arc Church began in 1926 as a chapel in a twelve-room house in west Asheville. The other eleven rooms were used as classrooms for the first parochial school in western North Carolina. At the time of its purchase, this residence was described in the local press as being valued at \$20,000. Monsignor Louis J. Bour, pastor of Saint Lawrence Church, and his parishioners pledged money to get the parish started. Individual parishioners donated articles needed to furnish the chapel, such as linens, a chalice and candlesticks. The chapel had a small pump organ that provided accompaniment for singing. This chapel served as the church until 1936 when a school auditorium was built and quickly became the new church. This auditorium still serves as the church today.

Four years after the parish was established, records indicated there had been six baptisms, no deaths, two converts and no marriages, with a total of 180 parishioners. My mother and my three older sisters and I became charter members of this parish and were counted among these 180. Parishioners appreciated the convenience of having a church within walking distance of their homes.

The pastors of St. Joan of Arc were always warm and friendly and spent a great deal of time with parishioners. The bishop came every two years for Confirmation and there was always great preparation for his visits. One memorable parishioner was a spinster who lived alone. She always sat in the same pew on Sunday and every year crocheted a small pocketbook for each girl in the First Communion class.

Saint Joan of Arc School was unique. As stated earlier, it began in the large house serving as a chapel and the school. The school was staffed by Religious of Christian Education and they resided in the convent at Saint Genevieve of the Pines, a boarding school for girls. They were driven to Saint Joan of Arc every morning and picked up every afternoon at 5:00 by a very faithful chauffeur. Grades 1 through 8 were the original classes and, because of limited space and a shortage of teaching sisters, each classroom held two grades. The number of students was small, but the education was comprehensive and thorough. There were eight students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade when I graduated,

three girls and five boys. The sisters used a large hand bell to summon everyone on the playground. When the bell rang, students lined up according to grade and marched to class in time with a wooden clapper snapped repeatedly by one of the sisters.

Some of my fondest memories of being a student at Saint Joan of Arc were the wonderful field days that were held in the spring and the summer picnics. For the field day, teams were formed from all the students in the school and there was great pride in how they dressed for the events and how they conducted themselves during the competition and while they were waiting to compete. Points were given to teams for order and discipline. The students took this very seriously and behaved accordingly. During the summer, the sisters planned an all-day picnic on the first Thursday of each month, at which time we played games, ate and went to confession. It took me many years to realize the motive behind each of these events. The points offered for discipline at the field day were to make it easier to handle the students, and the picnic was primarily to get us there for confession.

Mother Mabel Monk was the principal of the school for many years and was a woman ahead of her time. She allowed a student to do the readings of the day at Mass. The reader sat with her and she directed that person when to read. These readings were made from the pew. I liked to read aloud and this served as a wonderful incentive for me to attend daily Mass.

I am one of three religious vocations from Saint Joan of Arc Parish: Sister Ethel Lunsford, a Religious of Christian Education; John Patrick Roberts, a Jesuit priest; and myself, a Sister of Mercy.

It was a great honor for me to serve as principal of Saint Joan of Arc School in 1971-72. During that time I was always aware of the many Sisters of Religious Education who had preceded me, primarily Mother Monk, whose name was synonymous with Saint Joan of Arc.

My memories of Saint Joan of Arc Church and School are fond ones. The school no longer exists, but the parish is vibrant and alive and still serves many families who are descendants of the founding members.



# *St. Joan of Arc*

ASHEVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1928



*St. Joan of Arc was established in 1928 in a large house. One room was remodeled as a chapel; the rest served as the first parochial school in western North Carolina. Approximately 70 youngsters comprised the first student body.*







## *St. Mary*

GREENSBORO, ESTABLISHED 1928



*St. Mary Church was formed in 1928 with the first church dedicated in 1936. The church has had two names. In 1948, Bishop Vincent Waters of Raleigh granted a request to call the church Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. The church retained the name until 1972, when again the church was placed under the patronage of St. Mary.*







# *Immaculate Heart of Mary*

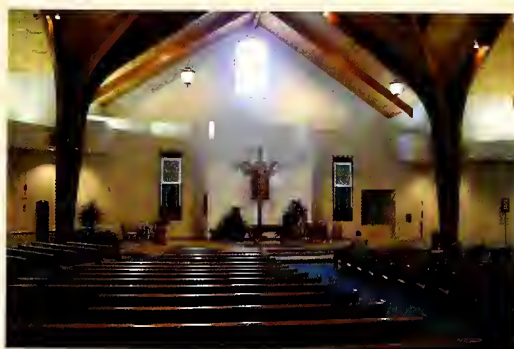
HIGH POINT, ESTABLISHED 1928



*Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, originally named for St. Edward, was a mission for the Benedictines of Belmont Abbey.*

*In 1924, administration for the church shifted to the newly formed Diocese of Raleigh.*

*The name changed in 1928 when new property was purchased.*







# *St. Francis of Assisi*

LENOIR, ESTABLISHED 1932



*Three Franciscan Friars from New York celebrated the first Mass in Caldwell County in 1932. It was attended by four people. The Franciscans served at St. Francis of Assisi parish until 1960.*

*St. Francis of Assisi, tabernacle*





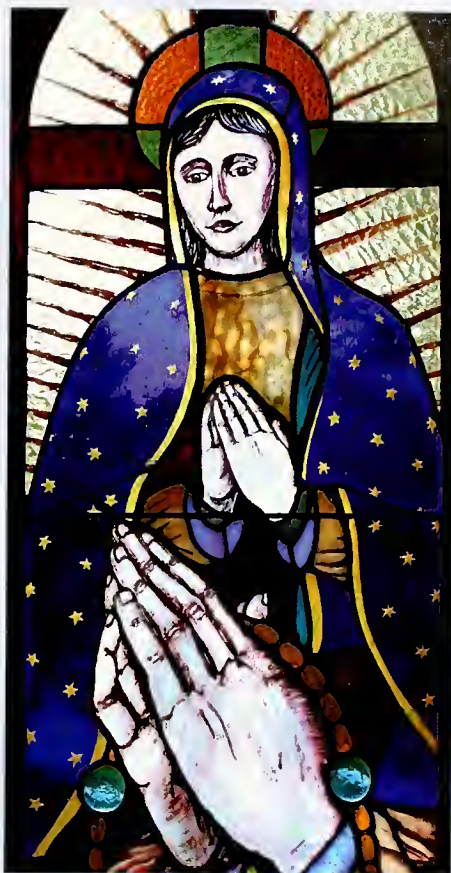


# St. Margaret Mary

SWANNANOVA, ESTABLISHED 1933



Catholics from New England moved to Swannanoa in eastern Buncombe County in 1933 when a manufacturing concern relocated. The architect for St. Mary Margaret was Benedictine Father Michael McInerney. The church was dedicated in October of 1936 by Bishop William Hafey of Raleigh.







# *Our Lady of the Annunciation*

ALBEMARLE, ESTABLISHED 1934



*Our Lady of the Annunciation consisted of nine families when formed in 1934.*







## St. Lucien

SPRUCE PINE, ESTABLISHED 1935



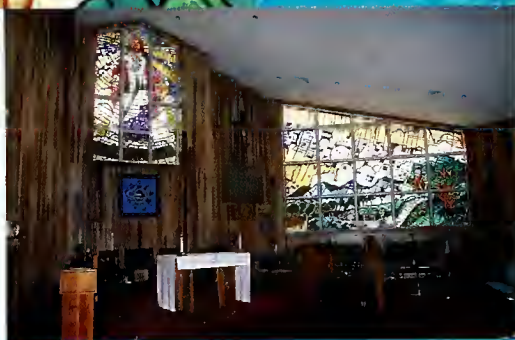
*Residents of Avery, Mitchell and Yancey counties began gathering for Mass in the 1920's when a relative of a Spruce Pine resident convinced a priest from Tennessee to make the trip. The Church was dedicated in 1940.*





# Sacred Heart

BREVARD, 1937



*Until the establishment of Sacred Heart as a permanent church in 1949, Catholics in Brevard attended Mass in private residences and a bank building. Midnight Mass of 1947 was celebrated in the Co-Ed Theatre.*

## A NEW FAITH HOME



by

**THERESA M. BECK**

Sacred Heart Church, Brevard

**W**e moved to North Carolina in January of 2003. Leaving Sacred Heart Parish of Monroe, New York, after being a member for over thirty years, was a traumatic experience, especially since I was leaving my grown children and other family members, as well as church friends. I didn't want to leave New York. Not being a person who likes change, I prayed that God's will be done, even if I didn't like the outcome.

Our pastor, Fr. Carl Johnson, advised us to take our time finding a new parish in North Carolina. He said to go to a few parishes before making a decision to join a particular church. So, we took Father Carl's advice.

Meanwhile, everything that could go wrong did. I was in total despair, but continued to pray that God's will, not mine, be done. Soon, we were in the season of Lent. Being sixty-two years of age, I didn't have to fast, so I decided to offer up my trials and tribulations for Lent.

Well, God's will was done. We found our new parish, Sacred Heart in Brevard, North Carolina.

Our pastor is Fr. Carl Del Giudice. At Mass in Sacred Heart Parish in Brevard, time is taken for people to ask for prayers as well as give special thanks. My husband, Chris, raised his hand and gave thanks for our finding a new home and parish. He also mentioned that I had gone through brain surgery and was doing really well. After Mass, Fr. Carl, our new pastor, welcomed us. We discovered that Fr. Carl had had brain surgery as well. We told Fr. Carl our whole story and he said, "Well then stay!" We took his advice and did so. We left Sacred Heart Parish in Monroe, New York and our pastor Fr. Carl. Now, we belong to Sacred Heart Church, in Brevard, N.C. and our pastor is also Fr. Carl. Since then, we volunteered to teach Faith Formation at our new parish.

We thought we were going to retire. Well, God's will was done and as usual, He is full of surprises! Amen! Shalom!

## BLOOM WHERE YOU ARE PLANTED

by

ROSEMARY HUBBARD

St. Patrick Cathedral, Charlotte

“Bloom where you are planted!” These words shouted at me from a poster in front of Our Lady of Wisdom Church on a college campus in Lafayette, Louisiana. After eleven years of marriage, three kids, and eight years of diapers, I decided to give myself a break and sign up for some music courses. Four days a week, I parked the car and walked to class under the massive live oaks lining St. Mary Boulevard, passing the church on the way. I can still see the sign, yellow with hand-lettered words drawn in various colors, and a large, zany-looking flower on the side that seemed to accuse me. “Bloom!”

Somebody must have known I needed to see this message. If joy was necessary for blooming, I had lived my life without any of that. One day I walked up to the sign and stood there, staring. A day or two later, a young man in a red sweatshirt emblazoned with the words “Ragin’ Cajun” waved to me from the open church door. He was short and round, and wearing cowboy boots. He called, beckoning me over. I walked up thinking how short, round people should never wear red sweatshirts. He was jovial and animated, but his eyes had pleading in them. He said he’d seen me the other day, and asked if I’d like to come inside. As I went in, I saw a priest’s collar beneath the red neckline. He introduced himself as Fr. Oris Broussard. All in one moment, I realized I had been talking to a Catholic priest, and that I had entered a Catholic Church. I was a Southern Baptist! What was I doing!

A native of North Carolina, I was a ninth-generation Charlottean. My folks moved here when buffalo roamed. They walked the trails the Indians followed, roads now called Tryon, Providence, Trade and Tuckaseegee Road. Those early pioneers, my ancestors to whom I am beholden for my life today, all read out of the King James Bible, if they could read at all. Gathering together, first in camp-meetings, then later in small churches, they worshipped the



Almighty and enjoyed the only social life available. Their grandchildren would later attend these same churches to learn to read and write. The Protestant church was there for them in times of war, drought, epidemics, economic hardships and Reconstruction. Without it, they would not have survived. I am grateful to the Protestant church, because without it, I might not be here today.

Well, Our Lady of Wisdom was very beautiful, I had to admit. The windows to the right looked out on a charming Spanish courtyard I had never known was there. Fr. Oris invited me to sit for a while, and then he walked away. There were gold-painted verses in Latin arranged completely around the room, just below the ceiling. Everything was strange but peaceful. A few months later, I observed Lent for the first time, sitting by these windows, just going in at odd times, and reflecting on St. Francis' Prayer, so familiar to Protestants. I attended my own church on Sundays for years to come. But I did join the charismatic group there, which leaned heavily to



Protestants, as well as the weekday choir, which was completely composed of Southern Baptists. Fr. Oris was quite a worker.

One summer day I drove past an elderly nun in her black habit, walking down a busy street. She looked hot and tired. On my return trip, I saw her still walking along and stopped to give her a ride. Her name was Sr. Margarita. She was twice my age, but she became my best friend in Lafayette until she died. She had no transportation, so I became her wheels one day a week when she delivered the sacrament to shut-ins. She was Cajun, like Fr. Oris. She was very humble, deferential to everyone—except to Jesus when she was praying. She was his foot-soldier, and if she ran into an obstacle in getting her work done, she prayed to the Lord. Whatever it was, He needed to get it done right now. Once, we were in a traffic tie-up. A house was being moved through an intersection. Two blocks ahead lay a 91-year old woman waiting for us and we were already late. The house came to a standstill. She began to scold the Lord loudly. I was shocked, but I remember my jaw dropped even further when that house immediately began to move. Only then did she relent “That’s better,” she said.

Years passed. My husband and I prospered. He did well in the oil industry as a private consulting geologist, and I got elected to the school board. Life seemed to shine on us. We saved money; we had a lovely home and friends. But one day it all came to a screeching halt. My teen-aged son, who had never been on a date in his life, was about to become a father. He also told me he had a bad drug habit. Completely unprepared for any of this, our lives changed forever that night. The oil industry began a steep decline, and my husband lost his business. With the economic downturn, the board had to take back a pay raise we had promised the teachers, as the law required us to have a balanced budget. People I had been friends with for years were now making angry calls to my home.

The baby was born 90 days early to unwed parents. Stricken with cerebral palsy, he became blind before he ever left the neonatal unit four months later. He would be confined to a wheelchair

all his days, and would not live beyond age twenty. I can speak with experience when I say that any parent or grandparent with a child like this suffers every day that the child suffers. We turned to our families, only to find that some relatives were furious he had been born at all. A rift that was to last twenty years began to grow. Our savings dwindled, and we were forced to sell our home. Our car malfunctioned on the interstate and my youngest child and I came close to death. Every few days, some crisis arose that was unrelated to the crisis of two days back.

We limped back to Charlotte. All I’ll say is, Thomas Wolfe was so right – you can’t go home again. I began to read the book of Job, the favorite book of my late parents. We prayed continually, often in the middle of the night when we couldn’t sleep. We knew hunger from time to time. I cried hard for most of two years. We became withdrawn, not leaving the security of our home for days, even to go out into the yard. We were passing through the Dark Night of the Soul, written about by John of the Cross.

Estranged for different reasons from both our families, we tried to re-invent ourselves. We joined a country Baptist church where I had nine generations buried in the cemetery. Desperate for family, I knew I had relatives I had never met there. They were good, fine people, but they lived in the past, always worrying a black family might want to join or that some charismatic people would come to disturb their peace and calm. They had just caused their last pastor to leave over this. Sometimes, Sunday was the worst day of the week over there.



*St. Patrick's School*

My husband and I were still in pieces emotionally from all we'd gone through. So, I talked to him about the sense of family and belonging I had always felt at Our Lady of Wisdom. We decided to go to St. Peter's Catholic Church on Tryon Street in Charlotte and join the RCIA. Well, to make a long story short, we flopped at it. It wasn't their fault. It was ours, and mostly mine. I had a wonderful sponsor, but a terrible attitude. People were being kind to me and I couldn't take it. We were in no shape to make yet another life-changing move. We were not able to complete RCIA and left. Yet, we both knew the Catholic Church was in our future. Time passed, and we attended St. Patrick's Cathedral and decided to go to RCIA again. This time, we were ready to make the change. That was ten years ago and we've been active parishioners at St. Patrick's ever since.

There's no way we would have told our families we wanted to convert, let alone invite them to the Easter Vigil. That would not have been in the realm of possibility. Some still are not happy about our decision, but they will have to live with it. We have matured in our faith. I particularly love the Chapel of Perpetual Adoration at Belmont Abbey. I am on their schedule of adorers and am devoted to the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, which is dedicated to the souls of the dying. Two years ago, when the abuse scandal hit, I became very angry at the whole system. I quit going to Belmont; I ceased praying the Chaplet. Before long, my spiritual life was going downhill. I returned to prayer at Belmont and it is better than ever now. God can deal with His Church better than I can. Whatever its flaws, the Church has something eternally beautiful about it, which I cannot describe.

I'm glad I did return to my routine because this past year saw a new set of troubles come along. My handicapped grandson died in March. After many trips to the hospital, he was released in death. We rejoice that he is in no more pain. I know he's in heaven and can talk and see and maybe even ride a bike – all the things his body would not let him do on earth. In July, my daughter was operated on for cancer. In September my aunt – mother and friend to me since my own mother died – passed away. There are other issues over which we have no control, like retirement and aging. But when the storm hits, I have



learned to simply double up my efforts with the Holy Spirit in the chapel at Belmont Abbey. It's not what happens to you, it's how you handle it.

When I was younger, the eternally asked question was "Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?" I avoided that one because I honestly did not know what they were talking about. I would sing the old hymns like "Softly and Tenderly," and as lovely as they were, they were hollow words for me. But I can honestly say that as a Catholic, I have come to know Him in a personal way. He looks forward to my coming in the door at the chapel, sad and alone. He wants me to pray the Chaplet, because He doesn't want to lose any souls. Like Fr. Oris, He is glad to see me. "Come apart and rest awhile," He says. "Let's visit. We'll talk about how you can take up my yoke."

Only now can I sing these words of the old Baptist hymn with understanding:

"And He walks with me and He talks with me,  
And He tells me I am his own.

And the joys we share as we linger there,  
Are like nothing I've ever known."



## A SOUTHERNER'S JOURNEY TO CATHOLICISM

by

JANE PARDEE HINSON

St. Patrick Cathedral, Charlotte

I am a native Charlottean, not something common anymore to this area that is populated mostly with transplants from the north and an ever-increasing population of Latin Americans. The presumptive question used to be, "You're from the South, are you Baptist or Presbyterian?" For me, this held true. I was raised in the Presbyterian Church, one about a block-and-a-half down the street from St. Patrick Cathedral.

Like a lot of our nation's youth, religion was not an important part of my life as a teenager or young adult. My parents did their best, always making sure we attended Sunday school and church. But for us children, it was a chore, not a blessing.

I took religion classes at the university and loved them. I reveled in learning about other religions. It amazed me how perfect other cultures found their religions, and the peace they found in them. Why could I not find the same in my religion? (Granted, I didn't try very hard at this point in my life – it wasn't my time. I wasn't ready quite yet for what God had in store for me.)

Then one day, I picked up a book and couldn't put it down. It was Dan Brown's "The DaVinci Code." I started to ask questions of the most wonderful person in my life; the person who, if God wills it, will someday be my husband. At first, my questions were more expressions of disbelief based on what I read in the book. "Do you guys really believe this stuff?" "We don't," he said. He's a cradle Catholic. He made me promise to ask him questions about his faith rather than assume anything said in the book to be correct.

Then we got into an argument about something having to do with the Catholic faith. Neither of us can remember exactly what it was about. What I do remember is that argument marked the true start of my journey to Catholicism. He did not know why he was right, he just knew with unwavering certainty that he was right. I set out on a quest to prove him wrong. Instead, I became Catholic.

Becoming Catholic has influenced every single part of my life. I never prayed before. Now, I can't

imagine a day going by without taking at least a couple of minutes to thank God for everything that He has given me, for I am so unworthy.

I was 100% pro-choice. Now, tears come to my eyes when I think of the innocent babies who are being murdered every day in clinical settings, and I cry with pain when I think of the grief that their mothers and fathers must feel. And I pray for them.

There was a time in my life when I tried to avoid going to church as much as possible – I showed up for the obligatory Christmas Eve and Easter services, but that was about it. Now, I participate in Mass 5 - 6 days a week. I love the Mass. I love going to church. I love spending time with Our Lord.

Many criticize the Catholic Church for being too male-dominated, and for shutting out women. To the contrary, it was the Blessed Mother who really brought me into the Church. She is whom I was missing in the Protestant Church. After all, what is a family without a mother?

The most beautiful part of my conversion is that it has strengthened my boyfriend's faith tenfold. Now, instead of answering "because that's the way we do it," or "I don't remember learning that in CCD," he genuinely appreciates the history and tradition of his faith, and he lives his faith with much more conviction than ever before. We worship together and pray together, and our relationship with each other now has our shared faith as its foundation.

I am honored to be a part of the RCIA team at St. Patrick's, and have also sponsored a very good friend of mine who is undergoing a journey parallel to my own. It is wonderful to witness the excitement of all who are finding more in Catholicism than they ever thought Christianity had to offer. And equally exciting is to see so many young people (my age group) coming into the Church realizing that, contrary to popular societal thought, the "conservativeness" of the Church has merit. After all, everything she teaches us is for our benefit; if only more of us would take the time to learn why the Church teaches us what she does, we would all be a little better off.



# St. Patrick Cathedral

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1939



*St. Patrick Church was constructed in 1939 when a Texas oil man, John Henry Phelan, donated funds to build a church in honor of his native Charlottean parents.*





## A NEW EXPERIENCE IN THE "GARDEN OF EDEN"

by

SISTER BERNADETTE McNAMARA, RSM

July 1, 1996 - June 30, 2001

In May of 1996, Bishop William G. Curlin called to tell me that the Diocesan Personnel Committee had suggested me for Pastoral Administrator of St. Joseph of the Hills Parish, Eden, North Carolina and he wanted to know if I would be willing to serve. I thanked the Bishop for the confidence and trust he and the committee had placed in me and told him it would be my privilege to serve the Diocese of Charlotte in this capacity. This was not my first experience serving as administrator in a priest-less parish. I had worked for three years as the administrator of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Mocksville before leaving for a mission experience on the Island of Saipan. I reported to the parish on July 1, met with members of the Parish Pastoral Council, the Women's Guild, and several parishioners before leaving on a trip to Ireland that was already planned with my family.

I returned to the parish on the first Saturday of August. The Pastor, Father Joseph Ayathupadam, had already moved to his new parish and a visiting priest was celebrating the weekend Masses. He introduced me to the small congregation. I felt that the parishioners might be upset because they no longer had a pastor or a resident priest. I wondered how they would accept me, a woman, a nun living in the rectory, telling them what to do!!! Suddenly an elderly gentleman tapped me on the shoulder, took my hand and said, "Don't worry Sister, we'll support you." (That was Mr. Jim Gardner, the oldest living member of the parish at that time.) And support me they did! From that moment on I felt welcomed in the "Garden of Eden." St. Joseph of the Hills was now the place I would call home and where I would minister to the People of God for the next five years.

Living alone in the rectory was a novel experience for a Sister of Mercy of Belmont, NC in the early '90s. Since ministry required that I live alone, permission was granted, and I came to Eden with the blessings of my religious community.

Soon I met the pastor of Holy Infant Parish in Reidsville, Father Joseph Valentine, and together we

discussed our ministry responsibilities. He was the assigned Sacramental Minister to St. Joseph of the Hills Parish and would celebrate the Masses, the sacraments, funerals, etc. During my years in Eden, I had the opportunity to work with other sacramental ministers including Father John Putnam and Father Christopher Davis. Each added a different flavor to the life of the parish. I was also fortunate to have Father Louis Canino, OFM, from the Franciscan Center in Greensboro, to celebrate Mass and the sacraments from time to time. The parish also had a permanent deacon, the Reverend Mr. Gerald Potkay.

In October, Bishop Curlin came to install me as pastoral administrator and that set the tone for my ministry in the foothills. He explained my role and said my primary responsibility was to 'call the community to prayer.' Each day other responsibilities surfaced and I rose to meet the challenge. This was a new beginning and the parishioners and I embarked on this journey together.

After a few weeks, I felt more accepted and within months a close bond had developed. Parishioners already sensed I was there to minister to them and that meant everything. There was nothing too great or too menial for them to do. The older parishioners repeatedly assured me that they were happy I was among them and did not want Bishop Curlin making changes any time soon! This was truly a vote of confidence for me.

I made every effort to empower the laity and enable them to accept leadership roles within the parish. With the help of parishioners, I began contacting former members. Soon old faces returned to church and our numbers increased. Lectors, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and ushers were trained. Pastoral council members became actively involved and a finance council was established. The RCIA was begun and parishioners were trained to be leaders in this process. Faith formation was strengthened and teacher-training sessions were organized. God was truly

working among his people and their response was edifying. We found many opportunities to come together as a faith community to celebrate, pray, work, and play together. Now this community became my community away from home.

It became evident that community was a great opportunity to provide healing for our brothers and sisters who were alienated from the Church. Communal reconciliation services were planned. The community gathered and people shared their stories, individuals were healed and the Body of Christ grew. Opportunities for fellowship, good food and lots of fun were planned: Christmas, New Year's, Thanksgiving and St. Patrick's Day to mention just a few!

Visiting the local hospitals, nursing homes and the elderly in their homes was a very rewarding part of my ministry. It afforded me an opportunity to reach out to the people of Rockingham County and beyond, Catholic and non-Catholic alike.

Wayne Carter, retired police officer and actively involved in the parish, introduced me to the highways and byways and before long I was driving all over the county ministering to shut-ins. I returned from a sick bed or a wheel chair patient with so much energy, love and appreciation. They ministered to me and I learned so much from each one. Visiting in the hospital and the area nursing homes provided another opportunity to meet many of the non-Catholics in the local community. One day, while riding the elevator at Morehead Memorial Hospital, an elderly lady asked if I was the priestess at the Catholic Church on the hill.

I was invited to join the Ministerial Association and this added another unique dimension to my ministry. A spirit of ecumenism developed between St. Joseph of the Hills parish and many of the other Christian denominations in the county. Each year during Church Unity Octave Week, a celebration was planned and ministers from other churches were welcomed and celebrated with us. They brought members of their congregations and afterwards shared food and fellowship. Many attended the memorial Mass for Mother Teresa. Several of the parishioners worked at the Salvation Army, preparing and serving meals to the homeless. Others volunteered at Morehead

Hospital and local nursing homes. This created fellowship among them and the people they worked with and those whom they served. The bi-annual yard sale touched lots of people and gave them an opportunity to get to know parishioners as well as help generate funds for the parish.

In the spring of 2001, the much-needed renovation of the church began. The pews were removed and refinished. The ceiling was painted, the paneling cleaned and coated with polyurethane. The old carpet was removed and new padding and carpet installed. The light fixtures and stained glass windows were cleaned, the candlesticks and monstrance refinished, and all the chairs stripped, stained and recovered. Mr. Will Wilkins, a non-Catholic friend, designed and made the new baptismal font. The ambry for the holy oils was built and installed by Mr. Dan Daly and the credence table was designed and donated by a good Presbyterian friend, Dr. John Jennette. The old organ "died" and a new one was purchased with donations from parishioners and friends. The lower parking deck was enlarged. The parking area on the hill had been paved and striped earlier.

Finally, in order to protect the beautiful stained glass windows, a protective plexi-glass covering was installed on the outside of each window. Even the yard took on a new look. Additional shrubs, bushes and flowers were planted and outside lights installed. The main doors were painted and a welcome mat set in place. St. Joseph of the Hills had a new look and the parishioners were proud of their sanctuary. The parish quilt, begun in 1999 with the hope of being completed by the dawning of the second millennium, was finally finished by the members of the Women's Guild and blessed at the Thanksgiving celebration in 2004. Today it hangs proudly in the parish hall.

Serving the people of God in the "Garden of Eden" was without a doubt one of the most fulfilling and rewarding experiences of my lifetime. My ministry was marked with so many grace-filled moments. The community truly welcomed me and God reigned as we labored to build the kingdom among us. I'm grateful to Bishop Curlin and the personnel committee for giving me the opportunity to serve the Diocese of Charlotte in Rockingham County, "North Carolina's North Star"!



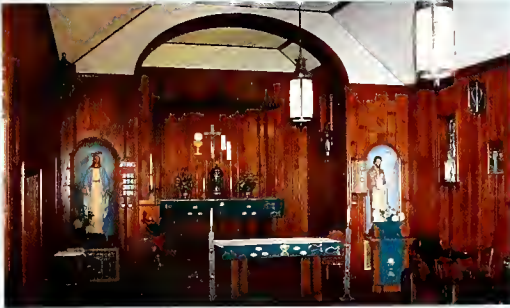


# *St. Joseph of the Hills*

EDEN, ESTABLISHED 1939



*St. Joseph of the Hills Church was dedicated New Year's Day, 1939. The church's stained-glass windows were donated by several American cardinals, archbishops and bishops.*





## A HEALING

by  
ROBIN C. ACH

St. Benedict the Moore Church, Winston-Salem

One afternoon in late October 1978, I was standing on a step stool in an attempt to hang curtains in our apartment's bathroom window. The curtain rod suddenly parted, causing me to lose my balance and fall off onto a tiled floor. The pain was excruciating. I had never been in that much pain before. I felt as though I had broken something. Now what do I do? I could not even get up to call for help. I felt trapped, when suddenly I remembered what my Dad used to say when you are in trouble: "Start praying." I started praying; however, no sooner had I started when the pain would consume me again. Now what?

Slowly I realized I should be praying a different way. It occurred to me that I should try praying the Rosary. However, that would be difficult for me because I had been raised in Brazil as my parents were missionaries of the Methodist church. While living in the Brazilian state Espirito Santo during the 1930s and 1940s, I witnessed both anti-Protestant sentiment and a mixture of African ritualism and Catholicism. Thus, I had a poor impression of the Church.

I had sufficient curiosity about the Faith in the early 1960s to receive instructions from Monsignor William N. Pharr, then assistant pastor at St. Leo the Great parish in Winston-Salem, and the late Father Joseph T. Tobin, assistant pastor at St. Leo's in the later 1960s. In 1968, the late Bishop Michael Begley, then Monsignor Begley, pastor of St. Leo parish, encouraged me to work with pre-schoolers of the parish. This further kindled my interest in Catholicism. In April 1969, I was received into the Church by the late auxiliary Bishop George N. Lynch of Raleigh, and became a member of St. Leo parish. Shortly thereafter, I joined a Bible study program at the parish and through Father Calvert Brown, a Jesuit assigned to St. Leo Parish at the time as parochial vicar, I was introduced to a booklet, *The Scriptural Rosary*. This made the Rosary especially meaningful for me because of the Scriptures, and I often prayed the Rosary this way prior to my 1978 accident.

To return to my accident: I was in severe pain and could not rise. Unable to help myself, I proceeded to reflect upon those Scriptures I found in *The Scriptural Rosary* that held the most meaning for me: "Let what you have said be done to me"; "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my Savior"; "And a sword will pierce your own soul"; "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from Me, nevertheless Your will be done, not Mine"; "Through His wounds we are healed"; "Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing"; "Come then, my love... Show me your face... for your voice is sweet and your face is beautiful." For three hours I contemplated those Scriptures. The pain left me and never returned prior to and after surgery. I was tenderly hugged by the Lord in a manner I had never before experienced.

I realized then that He cares for me as a mother cares for a child. Thus began a healing process that continues to this day. Most importantly, I have been freed from whatever anti-Catholic sentiment I had as a child. Now I often pray *The Scriptural Rosary* in Portuguese, the language I learned as a child.



Bishop's chair, St. Patrick Cathedral





## *St. Benedict the Moor*

WINSTON-SALEM, ESTABLISHED 1940



*The original parish family of St. Benedict the Moor was comprised of about a dozen local African-American Catholics. Property for a church, a parish hall and rectory, was purchased in April 1940 from a bishop of the AME Zion Church.*







## *St. Joseph*

BRYSON CITY, ESTABLISHED 1941



*St. Joseph Church, made of stone and built at a cost of \$11,567.95, was dedicated in 1941.*





## THE CHURCH ACROSS THE RAILROAD TRACKS

by

EILEEN MILLER,

Christ the King Church, High Point

On the Feast of Christ the King, October 20, 1940 the first public Mass of what was to become Christ the King parish was said in Hoover's Funeral Home in High Point. The Mass was said by Father Bernadine Watson, S. A., who had come south to open a black mission in High Point. There was one parishioner present at that Mass and in total only three Catholics in the parish. In a history written by Father Bernadine, the next reference made to actual numbers was "at Midnight Mass, 1942, there were about a hundred or more present."

The faith of Father Bernadine and his successors reminds me of what I have read about St. Paul in Thomas Cahill's "Desire of the Everlasting Hills," about his setting up of house-churches during the early years of Christianity, stopping at Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica and down to Corinth; coming as a stranger, pitching his tent in the marketplace, reaching out to fellow merchants, their families, servants and slaves; watching the community grow around him, and then when it is on its shaky feet, leaving the familiar, the community that he loved, moving on to the next city and making himself a stranger again.

St. Paul loved the communities that he founded, writing to them with affection and feeling their struggles and stumbles. In his Second Letter to the Corinthians, 11:28-29, he writes "Who among you feels any weakness that I do not feel? Who among you stumbles, and I do not burn inwardly?" He was a strong man of faith who loved Christ and the Church, but also loved the members, who saw them all as members of "One Body of Christ," slaves and freedmen, male and female, Jews and Gentiles. He had the ability to feel for them; to suffer along with them because he too had suffered.

There have been fifteen "St. Paul's" at Christ the King parish in the sixty-five years since its

founding. These pastors, along with the sisters and brothers who served with them, came as strangers but brought with them in their tents, as it were, gifts of strong Faith, Hope and Love. We are fortunate to have among us in our parish witnesses to their work; members who have faithfully attended for over fifty years, some who were baptized as infants and never knew any other faith, but others who converted as adults, who were drawn there by the faith and love they witnessed.

If the Catholic Church had a tradition of elders in the Church, these are the ones who would qualify. They are faithful witnesses to the birth and growth of our parish. They are old and proud now, proud of the treasure that they preserved with the help of God and now offer to all comers, but with a deep humility that attracts and welcomes. For Christ the King Church is a very humble church, sitting on the corner of Hoskins and Kivett, so close to the railway line that the structure can shake at times when the freight train passes. It seats just one hundred and fifty comfortably. There is just one stained-glass window which was installed in the year of the parish's Golden Jubilee, 1990.

It is easy to overlook this small church; I know I did when I first came to town when I chose to attend a bigger church in a better neighborhood. But I didn't find there the home I was looking for, so I ventured back to Christ the King and went inside. Of course, stained-glass windows are best viewed from the inside; this window depicts Christ the King with the world in his hands and four people at his feet representing the four major blood lines: the African, the Indian, the European and the Oriental. The scene in the body of the church is the window come to life; all the continents of the world are represented in our congregation with the exception of Australia (I don't think we have anyone from Australia but I could be wrong).

Since the arrival of Father Philip Kollithanath, who was appointed pastor in 1994, and the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul from India, there have been many articles written in the "High Point Enterprise" about Christ the King parish. These articles have highlighted its diversity, its growth, its outreach and its humble beginnings. Father Philip and the sisters will be the first to acknowledge that they are just continuing the mission founded sixty-five years ago and nurtured through the years so well by parishioners and pastors alike. The parish's focus has been on the growing Hispanic community, working on their behalf to help integrate them and to put them in touch with the services available for them at Christ the King parish and in the greater High Point area. While extending the hand of welcome to that community, Christ the King parish has grown to welcome some four hundred families from near and far.

I write as one who has come from afar, who came as a stranger looking for a home, looking for that connection, trying to replace the home that I left and the affection that I missed. We are a parish church of exiles, even those of us who have been members for over fifty years; we are all looking to belong to that Body of Christ that St. Paul wrote about and in which we believe; we share the loneliness of St. Paul as he left his familiar surroundings and those who had come to love him. At times he must have caught a glimpse of something that reminded him so much of home, or smelled on the wind from across the sea a familiar scent that brought a scene to mind. It happens to all exiles and all who are seeking. At Christ the King we recognize that seeking in each other, and that humble recognition tells us that we are all the same; all members of the same Body of Christ and all children of the same Father. The outward looking acceptance of the first members of our parish along with the inward looking faith and love that we have learned from Our Lord Jesus Christ have brought us from a parish of one, sixty-five years ago, to a parish of many, still kneeling at the feet of Christ the King.

*Christ the King, Stained glass*







# *Christ the King*

HIGH POINT, ESTABLISHED 1941



*Undated photograph showing presentation of gifts at Christ the King Church.*

*Christ the King, founded in 1940, originally served African American Catholics in High Point.*



## FAITH FORMATION CHANGED MY LIFE

by

BETH MASON BLACKBURN

Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Monroe

Three years ago when I volunteered to teach Faith Formation at my parish, Our Lady of Lourdes, I had no idea that it would change nearly everything in my life. And I've loved every minute of it.

Like most people, I wanted to give something back to the place where I'd received so much. Bishop Jugis, who was then Father Peter, our parish priest, helped me reconcile my life and redirect my focus for living the Catholic call to service. It occurred to me that my time might actually be a more valuable contribution than a check, since I had much more time than money to give.

Immediately, my faith got a shot in the arm. I got excited all over again about all the wonderful traditions our Church preserves, as well as the responsibility each one of us has to reach out in care and concern for those around us. The kids in my class responded with the same type of enthusiastic interest and desire to learn, so naturally, I couldn't wait for each Sunday to roll around. The hour we spent in class was the highlight of my week. Along with studying Church doctrine, we also had numerous candid, honest discussions that never could have taken place in any other setting.

My students all blossomed like spring flowers from just being focused upon, acknowledged and heard. Many times, I witnessed the points at which Church teachings cease being words and come alive, guiding thought, belief, action, and deed. I felt graced as I observed our religious instruction supplement new faith that came to guide moral decisions and laid solid lifetime foundations for generations of soon-to-be-confirmed adolescents. It was then that I realized my participation wasn't mere happenstance. It was by Divine appointment that I wound up here, learning and witnessing just as much as I was sharing and teaching. I'm certain that I receive far more from the experiences than the

knowledge I pass on and impart. And when I see my students, old or new, at Mass, I'm humbled each time as I stop to consider that I get to play a small part or serve in some small capacity in their religious growth.

It was here at church that I realized another call to action, and this time, not just within the Church. It became clear to me that all young people could bloom like that, just being guided and acknowledged and valued. And if the nice, solidly middle-class kids in my classes are any indication, children of challenged or at-risk situations would surely benefit greatly. I got so much positive and encouraging feedback from the parents of my students that I decided to change jobs as well. I took a job as a teaching assistant in the local public school system.

Naturally, I understood that this was no accident either. Every day I pass on and demonstrate on a larger scale what I've learned as a Catholic about service to others and kindness and caring for our neighbors. I spend my days now caring for and loving and serving all kinds of children, especially those of immigrant and poverty-stricken families. Now I can honestly and emphatically say that this is the meaning of life. This is what life is all about. This is what we're here for. I'm humbled and awed to have been shown this major truth of life at the ripe old age of forty.

The simple and beautiful and downright holy point, I discovered, is that service and duty to others has no prerequisites. Anyone can do it, even non-believers or non-Catholics, or non-Christians. The basic motivation to do the right thing is common in all of us as humans. And I believe that now, more than ever before, our communities desperately need examples of decent, ordinary citizens to demonstrate what a good person, a good Catholic, or a Christian looks like. So many people



today rarely see an example of a kind or helpful, positive, good morally upright person, or what a content, happy life that just being decent can offer. TV and all modern media are dominated by images that glorify the superficial, the rich, the famous, the hateful, the self-centered, the greedy, and the materialistic as society's winners, the only ones who matter in this world. It's become positively revolutionary to be an ordinary, average, upstanding, church-going citizen these days, because that's portrayed as old-fashioned and out of style. Who would have ever thought that being a "good Catholic" or a "good person" could be considered to be an alternative to the norm?

I would never have stumbled upon these realizations at any other time or at any other place in life. I'm certain of it. And now, more than ever before, I understand that we all have something to contribute in life. We're all connected to God, and by God, to each other. We're all affected by each other's actions or lack of action. Every day, we each have a blank slate, a fresh start, a new beginning.

We each have the chance to look for Jesus embodied in the people who cross our paths, in whatever form that may take. And we have the opportunity to be Jesus to those around us, in what we do and say, and let His deeds direct our actions. I don't think I'd have understood this in quite the same way had I not signed up to teach Faith Formation. It's an honor to pass on something so sacred and important as Catholicism to the next generation, as well as to watch them take up the torch of faith and run with it.

Oh, how I truly get it now! It's unbelievably powerful, just focusing on giving and serving, rather than merely receiving. In the act of service, I experience the human and the Divine at the same time. What a blessing!

I'm so thankful for the Catholic Church. Even a small, ordinary, seemingly insignificant life such as mine can make a contribution in the larger scheme of things. Indeed, we all really do have something to offer.



*Stained-glass windows at Our Lady of Lourdes, Monroe*

## ST. JUDE AND A DIAMOND

by

MARY ELLEN SPOHN

Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Monroe

Six years after being married, I had four children and they kept me busy. One typical day I spent the morning serving breakfast, cleaning up and doing laundry. My husband was at work. Holly, the oldest of our children was at school, the baby was sleeping and the toddlers were watching Sesame Street.

Then the telephone rang. It was the school nurse telling me that Holly had an upset stomach and asked if I could come and get her. "Of course," I responded.

I loaded the other three children into the station wagon, picked up Holly and returned home. Back home I put Holly to bed, fed the baby and went down to the basement laundry room. Later, after serving lunch to the other two children, I glanced at my left hand. "Oh, no!" The diamond from my wedding ring was gone. A year earlier I had lost a wedding band that was too big for me. A familiar, unhappy feeling gripped me. My husband Ronald gave me the now-empty ring as a Christmas gift. He saved for the ring for several months and now I had carelessly lost the gemstone. I thought to myself, not even a good meat-loaf could make up for a lost diamond.

Although I was full of dread, I didn't panic. I went upstairs and knelt down in the living room. I reached for my St. Jude prayer card. If anyone could help, it would be the patron saint of the impossible: St. Jude.

I prayed and asked for forgiveness for being materialistic. I needed help. With two children sleeping upstairs and two playing downstairs, I reviewed my actions over the course of the day. The diamond could be anywhere! I went to the kitchen sink where I had washed dishes. No diamond. I went to the laundry where I had some diapers soaking in the sink. No diamond.

I went into the half bathroom off the kitchen. My eyes looked at the pink, shag, throw rug, a

wedding gift from a relative. Something in the rug was shining: it was my diamond! "Thank you St. Jude!" I said aloud. Immediately I picked it up and put it in an envelope along with my ring.

The next day I loaded the children into the station-wagon and drove to the jewelers. I showed the elderly gentleman my ring with no stone. Thinking that I needed an expensive replacement diamond he asked, "Do you want an estimate for a diamond?"



"No," I said, "I have it right here."

"No one finds a diamond!" he grumbled.

"I prayed to St. Jude, the patron saint of the impossible, and I found my diamond!"

"I can't believe it!" he answered.

I told him if he ever had a problem he needed to pray to St. Jude, the patron saint of the impossible.





# Our Lady of Lourdes

MONROE, ESTABLISHED 1942



*Bishop Peter Jugis dedicated the new church at Our Lady of Lourdes in April of 2004. Father Peter Jugis served there as pastor when he was named Bishop of Charlotte in 2003.*



*Knights of Columbus and others gather at Our Lady of Lourdes' new church dedication.*

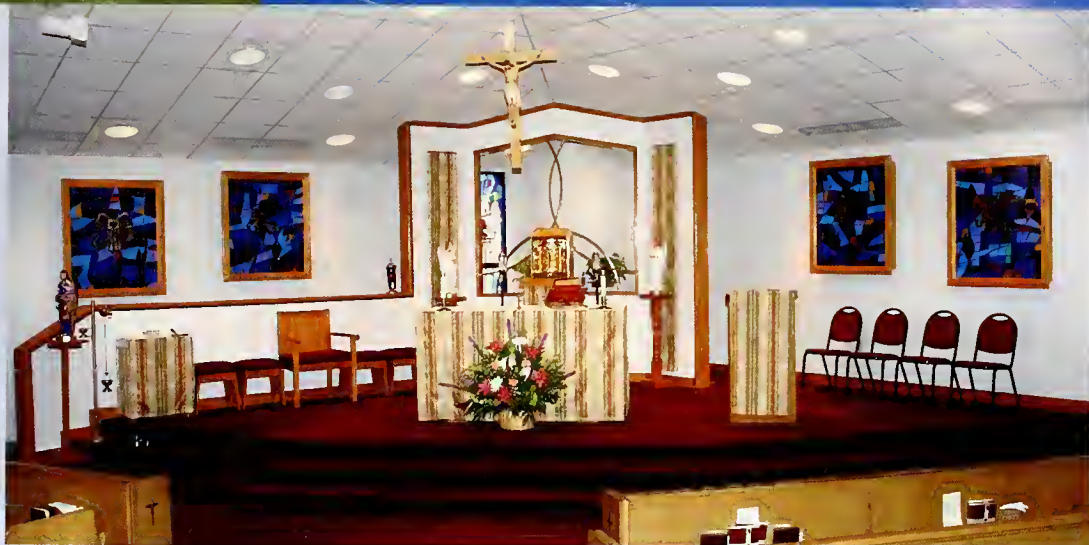




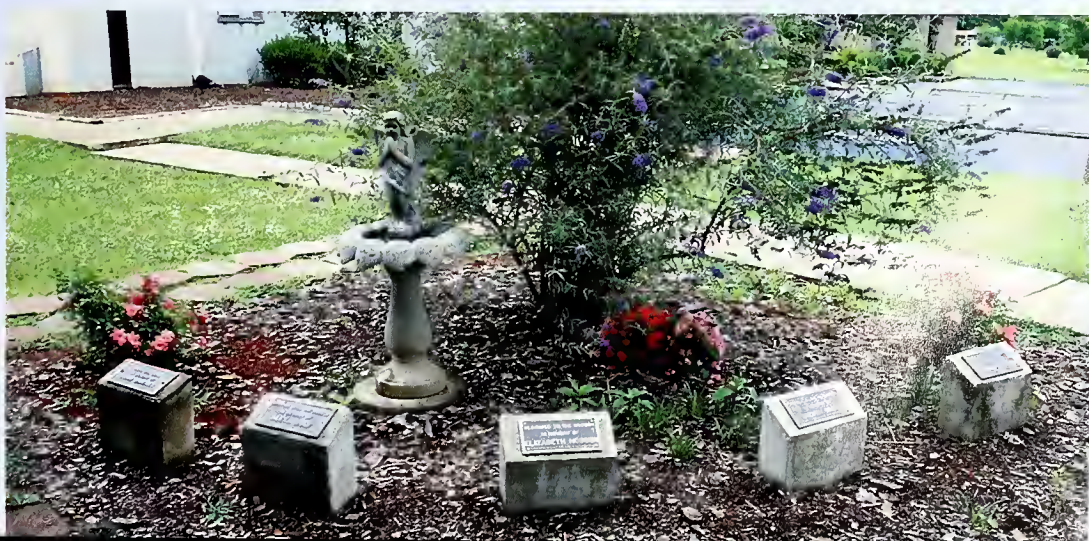


# *St. Dorothy*

LINCOLNTON, ESTABLISHED 1944



*The first permanent home for St. Dorothy Church was a 1,200 square-foot rectangular building on Aspen Street in Lincolnton.*





## CUE STICKS, PINBALLS AND COMMUNION

by

NICKELL CERALDI

St. Therese Church, Mooresville

Few Catholics know the frustration, the deep spiritual hunger, the unfulfilled desire that comes with living in a community where there is no Catholic church. In the 1930s and '40s, the Catholics of Mooresville knew this well.

Catholics must work in conjunction with the bishop of the Diocese to build a church. Fortunately the bishops of Raleigh and later Charlotte were deeply concerned about the flock. Around 1946, Bishop Waters of the Raleigh Diocese asked the Redemptorist Priests of St. Joseph in Kannapolis to serve the Catholics in Mooresville. When the priests arrived in town, they were greeted with eager hands and grateful hearts.

Prior to this, in the early part of the century, John Mack, a Melkite Catholic from Lebanon, in order to worship would attend the Presbyterian church and, leaning forward in his pew, secretly say the Rosary. Lewis Mack, his grandson, and Bill Koury had to be sent to the Oratory in Rock Hill, South Carolina to receive their instructions for First Holy Communion. It was at the Oratory that Sister Mary Columbia told Lewis Mack to pray for the safe return of his brothers from WWII and for a Catholic church in Mooresville.

So when the Redemptorist Priests arrived, they found a room already set aside at the home of Leo and Hazel VanHoy where Mass was to be said. Word spread and soon attendance increased so that the VanHoy house was not large enough. The congregation moved to the pool hall on Main Street where, before Mass, the sacrament of reconciliation was given in the corner by the pool table. Then later the congregation moved across the street to the Veterans of Foreign Wars room. Here the silence after Mass was often broken by the jingle of the pin-ball machine.

In 1950, Mooresville Catholics learned that Camp Lejeune was getting rid of some WWII chapels and that a chapel could be had for free. With the help of Catholic Extension, the Propagation of the Faith, and a generous gift from the J.H. Lewis family, land was purchased on North Main Street and a chapel was located there. To save money, the chapel had been moved without the outer walls. So when it arrived, Leo VanHoy, a brick mason, and other men of the congregation cinder blocked the outer walls. There was some debate about naming the new church until Peter and Anne Kiefer, former residents then living in New York, sent a beautiful five-foot statue of St. Therese of Lisieux. The gift decided the name.

The Diocese of Raleigh appointed Father Edward Beatty to serve the parish only a couple days a week. His absence left some administrative responsibilities undone. Once the lights were turned off because the bill was not paid. Bill Koury asked a friend at the light company to always notify him when the bill was due and he would walk up the street and pay it. In the fall of 1981, the parishioners learned that some extraordinary stained glass windows were to be given away by the Sisters of Mercy at their motherhouse in Washington, D.C., and at the same time, Mt. St. Agnes College in Baltimore was getting rid of some stained glass windows which had been for a long time in their storeroom. So in March of 1982, two trucks left North Main Street, one for Washington and one for Baltimore. In one truck going to D.C. were parishioners familiar with construction who removed six "Ladies Windows" and replaced them with clear glass. The other truck went to Baltimore for the 10 stained glass windows from the college storeroom. With the help of Law's Stain Glass Studio in Statesville, the parishioners installed the windows and finally, after almost a century, the Catholics of Mooresville had a proper church.



*Stained glass windows at St. Therese Church*

But more Catholics were moving into the area and the little church on North Main was becoming overcrowded. So with the help of the Diocese of Charlotte and pledges from the parishioners, land was purchased on Brawley School Road and a new church built. Bishop Donoghue dedicated it on January 30, 1988.

Why was having a Catholic church so important to the Catholics of Mooresville and what made them work so hard to get one? Father David Brown, one of four Catholics in a high school of 400 in the '40s, said one reason could be that Catholics, back then, were not that popular in Mooresville. Bill Koury, after

serving his country in the Navy in WWII, still had fights on Main Street because he was a Catholic. They simply wanted a church where Catholics were welcome.

But a more compelling reason was that they wanted a church where they could pass on the faith to their children. They wanted a church where their souls could feed on "living" bread. No other church had its patriarch commissioned by Christ Himself; no other church had the insight of an Augustine, the logic of a Thomas Aquinas, and the example of Mary and the saints. They wanted, and worked for, the one, holy, and Catholic Church.



# *Our Lady of the Rosary*

LEXINGTON, ESTABLISHED 1946



*Hispanic students and teachers, 2004-2005 at  
Our Lady of the Rosary, Lexington*



*First Communion 2005, Our Lady of the Rosary*



*Our Lady of the Rosary, Lexington*





## *St. Therese*

MOORESVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1946



*St. Therese has occupied several locations around Mooresville since its establishment in 1946, including a VFW hall and a chapel brought from Camp Lejeune and reconstructed. The present church was dedicated in 2002.*



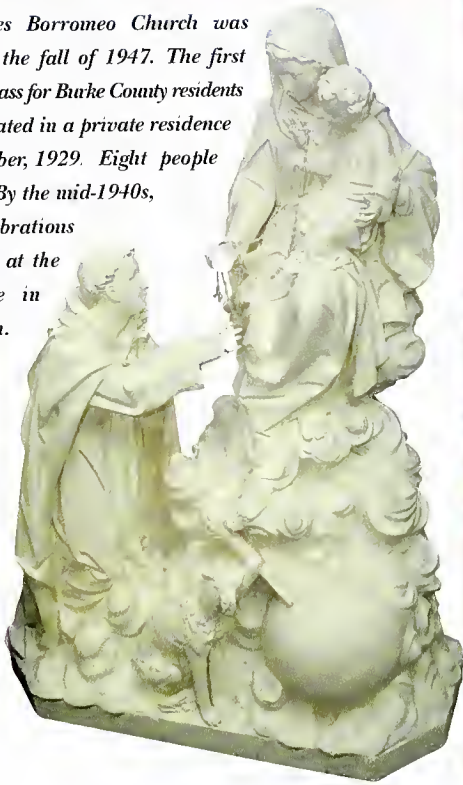




# St. Charles Borromeo

MORGANTON, ESTABLISHED 1947

*St. Charles Borromeo Church was formed in the fall of 1947. The first recorded Mass for Burke County residents was celebrated in a private residence in November, 1929. Eight people attended. By the mid-1940s, Mass celebrations took place at the courthouse in Morganton.*







# *St. Joseph*

ASHEBORO, ESTABLISHED 1948



*Catholics in Randolph County met for Mass beginning in 1888. Before establishing a permanent home, St. Joseph parishioners attended Mass in private homes, a law office and even a railroad car.*





## SLIDING DOWN RAINBOWS

by

**TERRI DELUCA**

Our Lady of the Assumption Church, Charlotte

"Terri, are you sitting down?" the nurse asked over the telephone. "We got your test results back and they were positive. You're pregnant."

I was overwhelmed, sobbing with tears of delight. Never had I been so joyful. We had wanted another baby for two years. Finally God had given us the gift of life again. This was the happiest day of my life!

Eight weeks later, we had our first ultrasound. "It's a girl," Dr. Horner reported.

"Are you sure?" I excitedly asked.

"Well, I wouldn't go and paint the nursery, but, yes, I'm sure."



*Clothed in traditional ethnic costume and holding the Child Jesus, Mary is portrayed as the beloved patroness of people of color.*

When the baby was 19 weeks old in utero, we had another ultrasound to check on her development. "She measures four weeks behind in growth," Debbie, the nurse, told me. She looked confused and at the same time concerned. Dr. Horner then came in. After close examination, he found the same.

"At this point we won't do anything but wait. I believe that babies grow in spurts. Let's get you back here in three weeks and we'll see how she's doing," the good doctor said.

After three long weeks, I returned. "She's grown three weeks in size, but is still four behind," he said. "Let's try it again in three more weeks." I felt encouraged. Something inside of me wasn't so confident.

My next report confirmed this feeling. Maria was now five weeks behind. "We're going to get a second opinion," Dr. Horner stated. I was concerned, but Dr. Horner assured me not to worry. So I didn't.

The next week my husband Phil and I went to see Dr. Shaver, a doctor who specialized in high-risk pregnancies. I had never considered myself "high risk" – until we walked out of the door that day.

It was discovered right away by an extravagant ultrasound machine that Maria had an artery missing in her umbilical cord. Next they found clubfeet, club hands, and an opening in her spine (spina bifida), and a "rocky" shaped head. The nurse and doctor suggested an amniocentesis to see what, if any, chromosomal damage Maria had. "It would be best if we knew what we were facing here," the doctor stated. "And it's legally too late to consider an abortion."

"That never would have been a consideration," I firmly replied.

The doctor continued with his prognosis. "She could be stillborn or severely retarded," he told us honestly. I looked at Phil and he nodded his head.

I reluctantly decided to go ahead with the amniocentesis.

One week later, an anxiously awaited phone call came. "Terri, are you alone?" the genetic counselor questioned. "We got the results of your test and they are not good. Your baby has Trisomy 18 and is going to die," she reported.

My weeping was uncontrollable. Never had I been so crushed, so devastated. I was shaking all over. The muscles in my legs were all wound up. How could this be?

"What is Trisomy 18?" I asked.

"It is a chromosomal abnormality which has caused your daughter severe mental retardation. As a result, her brain cannot tell her body how to function. Usually in these babies the heart stops or they just discontinue breathing."

"How long can she live with no life support?" I reluctantly asked.

"If she survives the birth canal, Terri, she could live a few moments or hours. I've seen one baby live 7 days."

Needless to say, I was in a state of shock. After 7 years of being together, Phil and I had never been faced with such a trauma in our lives. God had always been so good to us and had given us everything that we needed. You could say that our life together was perfect...until now.

One night soon after, Phil came home from work, walked in the back door and declared, "Honey, we are going to set up the bassinet and get ready for Maria to come home. If we believe that she will be healed, then God will heal her."

I had already made funeral arrangements and so we decided at that moment to bury (so to speak) plans for Maria's death and concentrate totally on praying for a miracle. I immediately thought of the woman in the Bible who believed that if she could only touch Jesus' cloak, that she would be made well. And so it happened. I became that woman. I believed without a shadow of a doubt that Maria was going to be perfectly

normal at birth. "I tell you solemnly, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours, says the Lord" (Mk 11:23,24). I confidently clung on to these words.

The next day I typed up a novena to Blessed Margaret of Castello, a woman who was cast out by her parents for her severe deformities, and sent it to everyone I know. I asked that they pray it for 9 days and if they would like to begin again, all the better. I also requested that they please make copies to pass along to others. After two months, we had over 200 copies in circulation that we knew of and an unknown amount distributed by our friends. Soon we counted people in 19 states who were praying for little Maria. We began receiving cards and letters from people we did not know saying that they were praying for us and for little Maria. These were people of all denominations, some who went to church, and others who didn't. But the bottom line was that they were praying. There was a congregation in England praying. A woman in Italy lit a candle each day for Maria. This child had hundreds upon hundreds of people on their knees - and she had not even emerged from the womb! This show of support through prayer only strengthened my belief that Maria was surely going to be a Christmas miracle.

Then on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 4 days before Maria's due date, an article came out in our local paper, The Charlotte Observer, which told the story of a woman who had a third trimester abortion. Her baby was hydrocephalic and had been given 6 months to live after he was born. The mother searched and found a doctor in Wichita, Kansas who performed late-term abortions. He ended the baby's life through an injection of saline solution and then had to drain the baby's head, as it was too big to get through the birth canal.

I responded to the article with a letter to the editor. To my surprise, it was published two days later. Issues supporting life in the womb get little if no publicity and so for The Charlotte Observer to print what I had written without any editing was unmistakably the work of Almighty God. "God created Maria for a reason and we love and respect Him and His decision to either take her to Himself or to heal her and bless us with her life," I wrote. "She is my baby, and it is my responsibility as her





mother to let no harm come to her. I love her just the way she is and accept her as God's special gift to me. Maria lives. She is the light of my life. Praise God."

Calls from strangers were on our answering machine when I arrived home from work that day saying that they, too, were praying. This led to a newspaper column in which our story of praying for and believing in a miracle and the integrity of life in the womb became widespread. In this article, my views on abortion and why I hadn't had one were probed. The columnist, Danyne Powell, gave my two reasons. "First, Terri believes abortion is murder. Second, to abort the baby would be to fail in trusting God's power to work a miracle."

"Maria is already a miracle," the article reported. "She's already made a statement on preservation of life in the womb. If she can save one life, that's why she was created." The pro-life movement had made the front page of the local section of *The Charlotte Observer*! Glory be to God! And from that article, there began a besieging of prayers. Baby Maria had touched thousands of souls to love her, pray for her and trust in God's wisdom and His will for us.

People began to feel as if they knew Maria. Praying for an infant seemed to create a love and closeness, as if she were their very own child. Maria gave humanity to life inside the womb. She was not just "a blob of tissue" as some pro-abortionists may argue. She was a living, loving human being crying out to the world saying, "I'm alive! I am God's creation! Don't give up on me! Hope in me! Love me!" And they did.

Maria was born on December 21, 1995 around 8:00pm. She departed for Heaven around 4:00pm the next day. All I could think about when the doctor said, "We've lost her," was she's in Heaven, happy and at peace. I had no grief at that time, shed no tears. And when I finally held my 3 pound, 9 ounce, 15 inch baby girl, my tears were tears of sadness and joy. The sadness was for obvious reasons, the joy for Maria. I wanted what was best for my child. What mother doesn't? And what life could be more superior to eternal life with God? I couldn't help but think of Mary, Jesus' Mother, when she held the body of her Son after He was taken down from the cross; His open wounds, His bent, broken body. Maria had spina bifida and a hole the size of my palm in her back. She was also bent at her hands and feet. She resembled the crucified Christ – the One Who came and gave His life for us. I was holding in my arms one who gave of her life for others. How privileged I was to be her mother!

Maria lived a perfect life. She existed nine months in her mother's womb and went directly to her Mother and Father in Heaven. She never felt pain or sorrow. She never shed a tear, never had to experience a grueling death. She only knew love, warmth, comfort and peace.

The story goes on.... To this day a genetic counselor in New York City has Maria's newspaper articles on file in her office. When someone comes in who wishes to terminate her pregnancy, she shows them Maria's story. Lives are still being saved through the intercession of my sweet baby Maria!





# *Our Lady of the Assumption*

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1948



*Founded in 1948, the present site of Our Lady of the Assumption is the third location for the parish. Stained glass in the church celebrates the diversity of the parish.*



*Mary's appearance to Bernadette at Lourdes sparks special devotion among Catholics of European descent.*



*Dressed in the regal clothing of the Sioux Nation, Mary rises toward heaven with the moon under her feet.*





# *Immaculate Conception*

FOREST CITY, ESTABLISHED 1950



*Immaculate Conception in Forest City began as a mission church in 1950.*



*Bishop Michael Begley dedicates parish hall at Immaculate Conception, 1978.*







# Our Lady of the Highways

THOMASVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1951



*Oblate Pastor Thomas Fitzpatrick remarked at the 2001 blessing of a refurbished church, "The amazing part of this church is the architecture. It looks like a Spanish mission, and there wasn't a Hispanic in sight when the church was built (1958). Now, half our parish is Spanish. It was a prophecy. It's wonderful."*







# Our Lady of Grace

GREENSBORO, ESTABLISHED 1952



Construction funding for Our Lady of Grace came from Julian Price, a Baptist. His wife, Ethel a convert to Catholicism, died in 1944. Price donated \$400,000 for the project. World War II and rising building costs delayed construction, but the Prices' children gave an additional \$300,000 to ensure completion. Construction finally began in the spring of 1950. The church is modeled after the Church of Our Lady of Refuge in Brooklyn, N.Y.



## A MESSAGE FOR NAOMI

by

CAROL LEEDIE

Our Lady Of Grace Church, Greensboro

Back in 1984, we moved from our small town of Reidsville, N.C. to Baltimore, Maryland for a couple of years while my husband was training for a new position with his company. Living temporarily in the heart of the city, it seemed there were no churches of our Pentecostal faith in the area. In looking around, I found there were many beautiful Catholic churches within walking distance, and feeling it important that the children be in church, I decided to visit the Catholic church until we could find our own church home.

As Sunday drew near, I began to doubt more and more that this was the right thing to do. For one thing, I had never been in a Catholic church, and knew nothing of how the service was carried out. That

alone could be embarrassing, and besides I was taking a two-year-old into unknown circumstances. And wasn't it the children I was concerned about most? I mean it wasn't going to hurt me to miss a few church services until I was able to locate a church with which we would be comfortable. On the other hand, I felt that we all needed to be attending a service as often as possible, but just how much would a two-year-old get from this Catholic service?

Sunday dawned warm, sunny and beautiful. The children were excited about going to the big church a few blocks away. I was still very doubtful, but seeing their excitement encouraged me to stick to my promise. We donned our Sunday best, and walked the short distance to St. Jerome's. "Dear Lord,"

I prayed as we neared the church, "Is it really all this important to have the children in church? Does a two-year-old grasp anything from a service seemingly geared toward adults?"

I had to admit the church was beautiful. It was a very old, cathedral style nave and even Naomi, our restless toddler, seemed awed to silence.

The service began, and soon the priest took his stand at the podium. I stole a quick glance at Naomi, who was squirming beside me. The priest delivered a message on thankfulness. The great room was silent except for the booming voice of the priest. "Do we take for granted too much in life?" he asked. "Do you ever say 'thank you' to your wife for all the things she does so faithfully? Do you remember to say, 'thank you' to your employer for the job you have?" Suddenly, in the brief pause little Naomi's voice rang

out. "Thank you," she said. Her words echoed off the walls and seemed to linger in the silence. The priest continued as though nothing had happened, but to me it was as if the Lord was saying, "Does this answer your question?" Little Naomi, with her very limited vocabulary, had heard something a two-year-old understood.

We continued to attend the Catholic Church and when we returned to North Carolina, my family converted to Catholicism. Naomi is in her third year of college now, and doesn't remember our years in Baltimore.

Even today, I am still awed by the quiet reverence I feel whenever I enter our church, and I'm glad the Lord saw fit to use little Naomi to show me the way.



## St. William

MURPHY, ESTABLISHED 1952



*St. William Church of Murphy was built after a nation-wide entreaty to families with the surname Murphy. The campaign raised \$5,000. The Catholic Extension Society matched the contributions. The church was dedicated in 1952.*





# *St. John Baptist de la Salle*

NORTH WILKESBORO, ESTABLISHED 1952



*Original church was a converted residence, 1952.*



*St. John Baptiste de la Salle was formed in June of 1952. The first baptism at the church was of Thomas Edward Treacy on June 19, 1952. Unfortunately, Treacy didn't live long. His funeral was the next day.*





# St. Francis of Assisi

FRANKLIN, ESTABLISHED 1953



St. Francis dedication, 1953

*In October 2003, St. Francis of Assisi observed its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a Mass celebrated by Bishop-designate Peter Jugis and a church festival.*





## WHAT'S IN IT FOR LEFTY?

by

CARROLL C. ESTES

Our Lady of Mercy Church, Winston-Salem

*THERE WAS A CYNICAL PHRASE HEARD A GENERATION AGO, "WHAT'S IN IT FOR LEFTY?"*

There's nothing in Lent for Lefty, the lad with the negative view. Lent isn't meant to be spent with faint resolutions at the beginning, grim endurance toward the end. Lent should be invested; a time of prayer and fasting, yes; of obedience to prescribed canon law (much less demanding in the letter these days, but challenging in the spirit). To follow the letter and avoid the spirit would be a real pity and a great waste indeed.

This is a time of preparation and paradox wherein, with a clear view of Christ's immortality, the season is epitomized in His glorious Resurrection (which climaxes with fresh, green growth of the soul the hidden germination in the child of God who dies to self that he may live in Christ).

Our immortality is not of this world. We have but the briefest time to invest whatever coin of the spiritual realm we can amass in order to secure our

future for eternity. Where does ours lie? Hell's Acres? Or the Garden of God? Our destiny is no gamble: "You pays your money and you takes your choice." But for God's sweet sake and the sake of the Heaven to which we aspire, let us ponder: it is not just what we do, but what we are, striving to be children of God, surrendering our wills to the Holy Spirit for guidance. Let us not be strangers in our Father's house. We can and should pray anywhere and everywhere, but best at Mass. The most efficacious prayer comes from the heart, the greatest good from obedience to God's Will. Let us have charity of heart and mind, tongue and purse.

The previous year's Lent was the last for many we knew. Let us invest this Lent as if it were (as well it may be) our last, best chance to prove that, for us, Gethsemane and Golgotha were not in vain. And may Easter find us sharing in the peace, love and joy the celebration of His Resurrection offers us.



*Our Lady of Mercy Church was founded in part because of a large influx of Western Electric employees who relocated from New Jersey to Winston-Salem in 1954.*



# *Our Lady of Mercy*

WINSTON-SALEM, ESTABLISHED 1954



*Winston-Salem Outdoor Mass for Feast of the Assumption, 1980s*



*Our Lady of Mercy School*



*Bishop Jugis pours Holy Oil on altar of newly dedicated church building, September - 2005*



## EULOGY FOR BISHOP MICHAEL J. BEGLEY DELIVERED AT ST. ANN'S, CHARLOTTE

by  
NANCY WEST

**B**ishop Begley had his own word for "friends," as Jesus addressed the disciples. He called everyone "partner." That simple touch illustrates the kind of bishop, the kind of priest, the kind of person he was. Named a partner, you had to find out just what your part in the partnership would be.

It is Bishop Begley's fault that I am here. He always was asking me to do just a little more than I thought I could do. All of you probably felt the same. Today it is my job and joy to touch on memories of a very human saint who walked among us.

To the Galatians Paul wrote, "I have been crucified with Christ and the life I live now is not my own; Christ is living in me. I still live my human life, but it is the life of faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." It is this human life of Bishop Begley we have been privileged to share. Now we see what a person looks like when he is a continuous "yes" to Jesus and "no" to self.

He brought his housekeeper, Mary, when he came to St. Ann's. She was a death-bed legacy from his friend Fr. Pat, and she took care of "this child here," guarding him fiercely from interruptions. At our annual Fall Festival, the best customer at all the booths was Mary with the pastor as her attendant, stowing her purchases in the large basket he carried. He drove her wild with his lack of concern about his appearance. Once Mary had induced him to purchase a new suit at Belk's and asked him later why he hadn't worn it; a search produced the missing package under the snow on the back porch.

Other helpers who were being helped themselves were Fr. Joe Tobin and Little Mike O'Keefe and the men of St. Vincent de Paul Society. The St. Vincent men, including my late husband Walter, met with Monsignor every Monday night to plan their service to the needy. The men were deeply formed by their leader who cared about everyone God made. These men recall those sharing times running late,



ending when the pastor wanted to get his breviary prayed before midnight.

During the early years of his pastorate of St. Ann's, Monsignor Begley was also Director of Social Services for the Diocese of Raleigh. He was somehow able to handle the workload with the travel it involved. We were called on to help with various needs such as becoming godparents of some precious deserted infants. This position also had something to do with our family doing some foster parenting.

As Bishop, Michael Begley's obedience continued. Vatican II said open the windows! Use English! Allow the laity full participation of the life of the Church! He was a big proponent of councils, both parish and diocesan. Bishop Vincent Waters said to him, "Get into this Cursillo movement." He did. I can hear him presenting crosses, "Christ counts on you," and the response, "I count on Christ." He sent me



to Baltimore to make the Cursillo weekend and help bring it back to N.C. The multiracial participants enriched our experience of Church. How beautiful was the spread of this movement in our new diocese. It opened us to the sharing of our intimate faith life.

His great obedience served us all well when, six years after leaving St. Ann's for St. Leo's, he was asked to become Bishop. He was 63 years old, but his "yes" was the beginning of a great pastorate and a great diocese.

He also promoted ecumenism. Among the many interfaith events was one that touched me especially: our new Bishop was invited by Methodist Bishop Hunt to speak at First Methodist church. I grew up in that church and sat in it with my family on Sundays for 27 years. What a blessing of unity that service was.

Another unique experience offered to me by Bishop Begley was being asked to speak to the Carolina Priest Association at a meeting in Charleston. Evidently Bishop needed to fill the slot for a lay speaker on the priesthood. He asked me, knowing I had quite a conviction about the position of women in the Church. He never asked me about what I was going to say. "The View from the Pew"

that I delivered was evidently satisfactory to my sponsor, who humbly listened.

Calling the people of God to develop their God-given abilities was one of his great gifts, seen over and over in his life, a way of calling them to God. In his last years, from his window at Maryfield, he could see a little cottage below. He said it was the home of his former professor in the School of Social Work at Chapel Hill. Years after Monsignor had earned his master's degree, this woman told him that because of knowing him, she and her husband had been led to become Catholics. When visitors came to his room at Maryfield, they would hear about someone being prayed for and nudged to become a seminarian, or were asked to pray for some priest temporarily away from the Diocese. He never stopped working for God.

In baptism, Michael Joseph Begley put on Christ. In life he was infused with Christ. May he also share His resurrection.

#### READINGS AT THIS MASS:

Isaiah 61:1-3  
Ephesians 4:11-16  
John 15:9-17



## THE JOURNEY FROM "COME WITH ME" TO "COME TO ME"

by  
LUIS AND SARA WOLF (AND SR. ANDREA INKROTT, O.S.F.),  
as told to David Hains

In 1961 Luis and Sara Wolf were married in Havana, Cuba. But the blissful outlook of newlyweds was not theirs. Two years earlier, like most people in Cuba, they greeted the revolutionary Fidel Castro with open arms, dreaming that he was the great liberator who would end the tyranny of Dictator Fulgencio Batista. They were wrong. Castro embraced Communism and transformed Cuba into a police state and made their lives miserable and filled with fear.

Family gatherings were now suspected as anti-revolutionary. The word "hello" as a telephone greeting was replaced with the words "country or death." You were either with the repressive nature of the new regime or you were a counter revolutionary. Friends of the Wolfs who disagreed with Castro were greeted by the command, "Come with me." Some disappeared for a few months, others disappeared and never returned. One friend was simply shot. Many of the priests and nuns they knew were exiled, and worst of all, they could not attend Mass without being watched.

Under the guise of visiting relatives in America, they obtained a one-month travel visa. When they reached Miami they asked for and were granted political asylum. Eventually they made their way to North Carolina, first to Raleigh and then to Charlotte, where Luis worked for Duke Power Company.

Luis and Sara grew up with a rich tradition of Catholicism. They recall dramatic Holy (Good) Friday processions of the Eucharist in Havana, and how all of the radio stations would play sacred music on that day; Masses where the men would typically stand in the back of the church while the women and children sat in the pews, and great family gatherings that were centered on religious feast days. Luis and Sara were both active in their church youth groups.

They settled in Charlotte in the late 1960s, attended St. Ann's and sent their children to Catholic

School. The Catholic population in those days was small, but the Hispanic population was miniscule, made up mostly of Cubans and Ecuadorians. That began to change, slowly at first and, beginning in the 1980s, an avalanche of people from Latin America: Mexicans, Columbians, Venezuelans.

Luis and Sara emphasize that there are a lot of cultural differences between different nationalities of Hispanic people, but two things that united them are a common language and the Catholic faith. Sara says, "We tried to organize social clubs and sports leagues





and there was a lot of enthusiasm for them at first, but eventually interest died out. The one thing that really gets all of the Latin American people together is church."

The couple is eternally grateful to Bishop Michael Begley, who long before the wave of immigration hit, saw a need for Hispanic ministry in the diocese and established it in 1972, the year of his ordination as bishop of Charlotte. Father Joe Waters began celebrating the Mass in Spanish on a regular basis at Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Charlotte in 1975.

Waters said that the crowds for those early Masses were small. "At first we ministered to Cubans and some people from the Caribbean." Waters says the language was a barrier at first. "Many Hispanic people who came here worked on farms in the rural part of the state where they kept the native languages. In the colder months they moved to factory jobs and then they started to learn English. At first it was men only. But later the families followed." Waters recalls the music and the openness of these new-to-the-diocese Catholics. "They are a very friendly people."

For Luis and Sara Wolf, living in their adopted country meant some changes in their faith lives. Catholics were in a minority in the diocese and often other Christians would ask them difficult questions about their faith. For Sara, the worship experience was very different. She says the Latin American people are more passionate and demonstrative in their prayer life. "The devotion of the Hispanic people has opened the eyes of many people here." At the same time, she says, the Hispanic people have benefited from the more formal approach to teaching the faith that includes Sunday school, retreats and many activities for teens and young people.

The Wolfs have long since settled into the American way and don't even wonder how their faith lives would be different had they stayed in Cuba. Sister Andrea Inkrott, Director for Hispanic Ministry for the diocese, says the Wolfs' experience is in many ways typical. The customs they brought from Cuba, combined with their new way of life, have created a richer worship experience for both the Latino and the American.





# St. Ann

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1955



*Established in 1955, the first pastor of St. Ann's was Monsignor Michael Begley, later appointed the first Bishop of Charlotte. In 1957 Monsignor Begley baptized the infant Peter Jugis, the fourth Bishop of Charlotte.*







# *St. Mary, Mother of God*

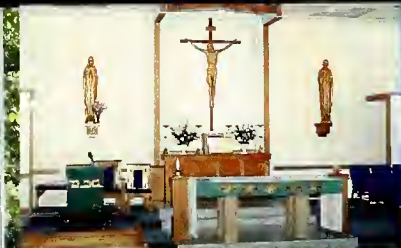
SYLVA, ESTABLISHED 1955



*St. Mary, Mother of God Church built by William Murphy in honor of his parents.*







# *Our Lady of Consolation*

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1956



*Our Lady of Consolation, founded in 1955, is Charlotte's only African-American parish. The parish mission blends the richness of African-American culture with Catholicism.*



*The Perpetual Hope Gospel Choir – 1983*





*Monsignor Anthony Marcaccio of St. Pius X Church on a visit to Manazo, Peru*



*St. Pius X Church began a relationship with a sister parish in Manazo, Peru in 1984. Pictured here is a mission of the Manazo parish in Vilque, Peru.*



## PERU

by

FRANK RODGERS, ST. PIUS X CHURCH

I saw God in Peru in the incredible panorama of natural wonders.  
 In the stars you can almost touch, I saw the Creator, God the Father.  
 In the poverty, pain and suffering in the masses,  
 In the streets of Lima, Cuzco, and in the altiplano,  
 I saw the suffering Son Jesus Christ.  
 Yet in these same masses there was a spirit of hope, tranquility.  
 And in some instances even joy that transcended the misery.  
 And in this I saw the Holy Spirit.  
 God is alive in Peru. I was there and I saw Him.





# *St. Pius X*

GREENSBORO, ESTABLISHED 1956



*The church and school of St. Pius X opened in 1955, the year Pius became a Saint.*



*St. Pius X Catholic School*

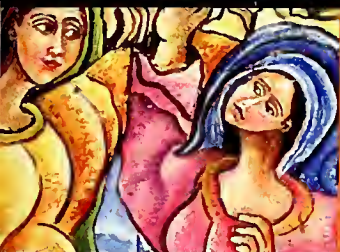


*First Mass in 1955*



*Sanctuary at St. Pius X Church*





# *St. Elizabeth of the Hill Country*

BOONE, ESTABLISHED 1957



*The present St. Elizabeth of the Hill Country Church replaced a building that was destroyed by fire in 1984.*



*Fr. Joseph Kerin hears a confession at the American Legion Hut in Boone, late 1950s*





## ANGELS AND BLUEBERRIES

by

CAROLE BUCKLEY

St. Gabriel Church, Charlotte

This morning I picked blueberries. They are small, but beautiful in color and delicious in taste. Two weeks ago, my daughter, Kim, and my granddaughter, Julia, came to this same spot and picked the first "crop."

I just overheard a kayaker on the lake who said it's not worth stopping and picking the berries. That's okay with me, you can think that way. The berries probably are more plump at the produce stand, but I love them this way.

My mother, who passed away in 2005, would be picking blueberries if she were with us this summer. The memories that I have of berry-picking with her are real treasures now. Mom used to tell me of her summers spent with her grandmother. And, yes, they picked berries, and many other fruits and vegetables.

I feel so close to God when I am doing this simple thing. He is the one who had the sun shine on them, and then led me here to the beach today. When I am not feeling "quite myself," I am drawn to nature. Spending time to reflect always makes me feel better!

How truly wonderful it is to see that my daughter and her daughter will carry on this lovely summer tradition. May they also feel closer to God and all of nature, just as I do. May they also share and benefit from their time together.

It is not just about the blueberries. I left lots of them on the bushes today. I truly hope that someone else comes along, without a cell phone, but with a bucket or a paper cup, picks a few, and feels better, just as I do now.



## OUR EUCHARIST

by

ERNIE SHANKLES

St. Gabriel Church, Charlotte

Living creatures need nourishment in order to thrive, and sharing food is a tradition as old as man. The symbol of "breaking bread" is pre-Christian and the ritual of Communion is a part of His gift of crucifixion and resurrection.

Our approach to Eucharist is made in a solemn procession after the celebration of each Mass. Eucharist makes our Mass complete, and without Eucharist we may as well have meetings.

I relive my own resurrections as I approach the minister of Holy Communion. I remember our children's first Communions, a Christmas Mass at the Vatican as John Paul II served children lined up to receive the Host. I remember our son's last Eucharist as he returned home to be with Christ.

Children are welcomed to our table by way of the Eucharist, in the same way that small children are often relegated to a small table while the "grown ups" eat a special family meal. First Communion becomes a part of a child's growth. It completes a part of the child's education and becomes a "rite of passage" with special dresses and neck ties worn perhaps for the first time.

As he consecrated the Host in the Vatican, John Paul II removed his "Pope's hat" to remind us that before Christ, all are mere men. At Eucharist, he was a simple priest. The broadcast of the Mass around the world did not really matter at consecration; Eucharist makes us all equal. The scattering out of dozens of priests to feed the large number of people assembled did not detract from the symbolism of a simple priest consecrating the Host. We were one family being fed by our Father.

Our adult son, that precious boy who'd had his first Communion a few years before, was very insistent one Sunday that we all go to Mass together. He'd been very ill with cancer for a couple of years and this insistence was out of character but

something his mother and I respected. I was behind him in that procession and shared Eucharist with him a last time. The next Sunday, he was in the hospital and by Wednesday night he received Viaticum (Eucharist) and died. My last memory of him is his body lying in a bed and his lips still moist with the precious blood of Christ.

His mother was at his left side holding him and for one second, I knew I was in the presence of a Pieta. I glimpsed the grace of a mother's love, and that grace returns at each Communion.

It is so rare for a man to be touched by the grace of pure love. The Eucharist offers me that love each time I attend Mass.

Living creatures need nourishment and we all digest better in a loving environment.

We have that environment at St. Gabriel's parish in Charlotte. Perpetual Adoration is a twenty-four hour a day, seven day a week mission at St. Gabriel, and I suggest that this environment of love directed at Eucharist shapes our parish community.

When we moved to Charlotte we felt "at home." The environment felt right. All Roman Catholic churches have the same artifacts and symbols. All celebrate Mass in a somewhat uniform way. We are "one church, one body" with very slight differences. I know I could attend a Mass in any country and be able to follow the liturgy. I also know I would never feel as involved or as part of the environment as I do at St. Gabe's.

It is the home I come to when I need to be fed. I join many people when I approach Eucharist; I also am joined by many loved ones not physically present.

Nourishment comes in many forms, but the table set at St. Gabriel Church is a complete meal for me.



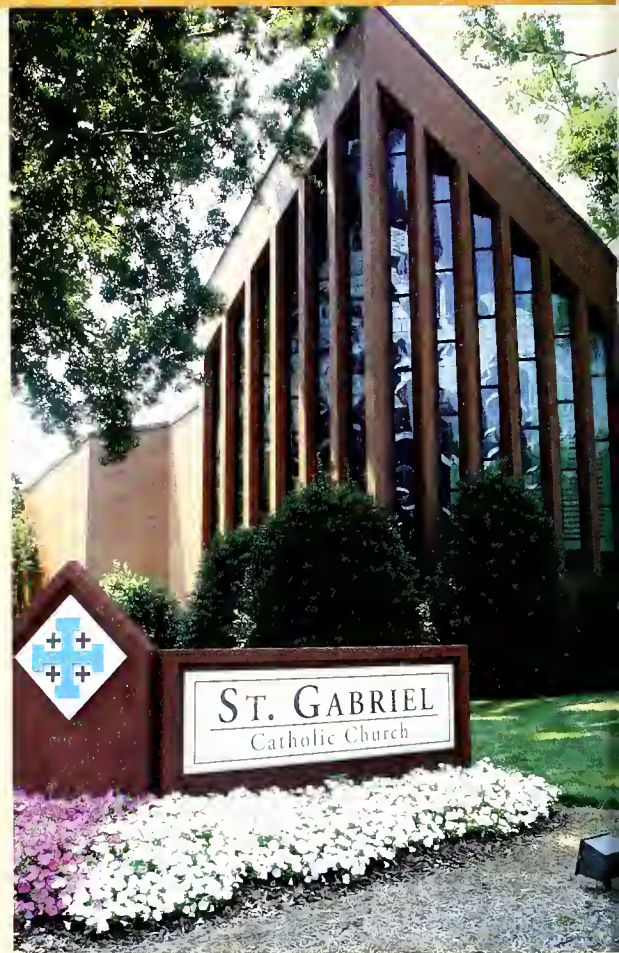


# St. Gabriel

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1957



*Founded in 1957, St. Gabriel parish was the largest in the state of North Carolina with 690 registered families. In 2006 with more than 4,000 families registered it was no longer the largest. (see St. Matthew)*





## PARADE TO A NEW CHURCH

by  
PETER UPHAM

*For the Dedication of the St. Eugene's Church Renovation 2002*

The news is good. The church is ready. The  
Mason has set the footings. The  
Builder has framed out the space. The  
Electrician has wired and sparked it. The  
Carpenter has finished the sanctuary. The  
Artist has adorned it.

We're on foot from our temporary space  
To our new church. It is like a parade—  
A grand, civic parade—as if  
Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, and New Year's  
Were all one holiday. As if  
A beauty queen will soon wave gracefully from a float.

Sunlight plays marshal.  
Birds chime. The sky flies its white banners.  
Hedges line the way, and flowers  
Hold up their blossoms like sparklers.  
The grass sways. The trees extend  
Their leaves in benediction.

We have been waiting, it seems,  
Forever. Some bystanders, innocent and guilty,  
Have joined us: a common place  
We've all been through, where  
We watch, we join, we learn:  
Ours the pageant, Ours the celebration.

A group up front  
Hold the young on their shoulders,  
The lame in their arms. We follow them.  
We are in our Sunday best.  
In procession, we are singing:  
Carry us, Carry us, Carry us safely on.

We are crucifers and lectors,  
Altar servers and deacons,  
Choristers and simple communicants.  
We are marching to our new church—  
The one we have built,  
The one we are still building.

Where our faces are the panes of color,  
Our limbs the bearing beams,  
Our raised hands the roof,  
Our hearts the sanctum, and our kindnesses the art.  
In this universal parade, this new church,  
There is room for us all.

*St. Eugene, Stained glass, Pope John XXIII*







# St. Eugene

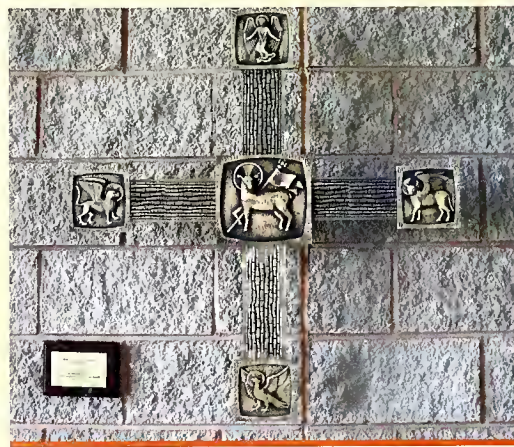
ASHEVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1959



*St. Eugene grew out of the move of St. Lawrence School to the north end of Asheville.  
Original church building was dedicated in 1969 and expanded in 2003.*



*St. Eugene, interior fresco*



*St. Eugene, Good News Cross*





## *Holy Redeemer*

ANDREWS, ESTABLISHED 1958



*Regular celebration of Mass began at Holy Redeemer in 1958. Visitors to the mountains generally fill the church to capacity during the summer tourist season.*



# St. Francis of Assisi

MOCKSVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1958



*In the 1950s when St. Francis of Assisi was formed, Masses were celebrated in local homes and later in a National Guard Armory. Bishop William Curfin dedicated the new church in 2002.*

## JOURNEY TO THE DIACONATE

by

JOHN T. KOPFLE

St. Vincent de Paul, Charlotte

Several years ago, a priest reflected in a homily about attending a reunion of his ordination class. Those who were still active in the priesthood after many years pondered why they were there, while so many of their fellow seminarians had left active ministry. Try as they might, they were unable to discern any shared personal characteristics to explain why they were the ones who continued to serve the Lord and His people as priests.

In September of 2002, 16 men of the Diocese of Charlotte embarked on a four-year journey of formation for the Permanent Diaconate. By the grace of God, after three years, all of us were still in the program. Many of us often ask ourselves, "Why am I here rather than other Catholic men?" Like the priests at the reunion, we are certainly not the smartest, most spiritual, best writers, or speakers, or teachers. There are many others in our parishes who have the talents and gifts to be "better" deacons than we. As I reflect on the 16 of us, I see a range of ages, occupations, faith journeys, talents, and interests. Some are quiet and unassuming, others lively and animated; some lean toward the intellectual, others the practical; some have known for many years of their calling to ordained ministry, others have identified it recently. After thinking about it a great deal, I have concluded that there are three characteristics we share: a love for the Lord, a calling to this ministry of service, and the perseverance to make it through formation. These characteristics are probably also shared by the priests at that reunion, and indeed by anyone serving in ordained ministry. Nothing spectacular, just the conviction that this is what the Lord is calling us to do at this time and the fortitude to do it.

Associated with the question of "Why me?" is a common experience of many who pursue ordination. It is a feeling of unworthiness for the awesome responsibilities that will be assumed. It can be overwhelming to think about the requirements of serving at the altar, preaching, spiritual guidance, comforting the grieving, and saying the right thing at the right time in difficult situations. I have felt this unworthiness often the past couple of years, especially when I reflect on past sins and failings in my life. It has been a great comfort to me to talk

with many priests and deacons about this and ask how they overcame these feelings. Without exception, their answer was that we are all unworthy of our ministries because of our human sinfulness and shortcomings, and we constantly fall short of perfection. They advised that the key to avoid being incapacitated by these feelings is to turn our lives over to God completely. The attitude is the one we take on each Sunday during the Communion Rite when we say: "Lord I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed." We recognize our unworthiness, but we also know that if we ask, God will provide the grace we need.

This is one of the many paradoxes of our faith: by assuming an attitude of total humility, we receive from God the power that enables us to use our unique gifts and talents to perform our ministries effectively. None of us is worthy to receive God, or serve Him, but if we acknowledge that, God will make us worthy. This occurs through grace, the sacraments, and especially the Eucharist. During 2004-05, the year of the Eucharist, we reaffirmed its importance in our lives and asked Jesus to give us the strength to overcome our faults and do the work we are called to do.

The Permanent Diaconate is above all a ministry of service. Our mission is to minister to God's people in whatever ways are needed at a particular time and place. Yet not only the ordained, but all Christians are called to serve God. Canon law expresses this beautifully: "From their rebirth in Christ, there exists among all the Christian faithful a true equality regarding dignity and action by which they will cooperate in the building up of the Body of Christ according to each one's own condition and function" (Canon 208). Thus, by virtue of our baptism, we all have an obligation to serve God and His people.

Like the priests at the reunion, most of us are not blessed with spectacular personal gifts. As believers, however, we need not be concerned about that, but go forward confidently and trusting in the Lord. As we 16 candidates entered the final year of formation, we asked God to give us the fortitude and compassion we will need to carry our ministry of service to the people of the Diocese of Charlotte.





## *St. Vincent de Paul*

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1961



*When first constructed in 1961, the St. Vincent de Paul Church consisted of a multi-use gymnasium. It served as the center of life for the parish until 1999 when Bishop William Curlier dedicated a permanent church building.*







# *Holy Infant*

REIDSVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1962



*Catholics arrived in Reidsville and surrounding Rockingham County around 1917 when the American Tobacco Company built a plant in the vicinity. Land for the present church was purchased in 1960.*





## THE FAITH CELL

by  
**BILL MATEVIE**  
Chaplain, Mecklenburg County Jail

I love my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ with all my heart, with all my soul and with all my mind.

Yes, it is personal! But, it wasn't always that way.

I spent the first eighteen years of my life in a Protestant church, seeing Jesus Christ as a "Good Samaritan." The following 22 years were spent unchurched and searching.

Then over an eleven-month period (1981-1982), my wife and I made a Marriage Encounter weekend and I converted to Catholicism and made a Cursillo weekend.

These past years have taken me to homeless shelters, monitoring a suicide hotline and 20 plus years inside prisons and jails in the Carolinas.

What has sustained me throughout this spiritual process has been the guidance of Pope John Paul II. I have come to know of certain absolute truths and crossed political lines with my pro-life and anti-death penalty positions.

My local spiritual influences have come from Rosemary, my wife of 36 years, clergy and lay people alike with names like McSweeney, Allen, Hoover, Pharr, Lawlor, Wenning, Francis, Jugis, Sanctis, and Farrelly.

The Lord has led my three adult children to Baptist and non-denominational churches in the area. I see them not as "fallen away" Catholics, but as disciples with strong Catholic roots who are spreading their strong religious faith to others in need of healing.

In 1995, Bishop William Curlin appointed me as Lay Catholic Chaplain to the Mecklenburg County Jail. These past 10 years have brought me face-to-face with accused killers, rapists and molesters. Ministering to Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims,



*St. Benedict, Greensboro, Stained glass*

atheists, adults and juveniles calls for building on denominational beliefs and seeing everyone as a child of God. It gives you a real respect for the truth when you have to help clean up lives that have been based on a lie.

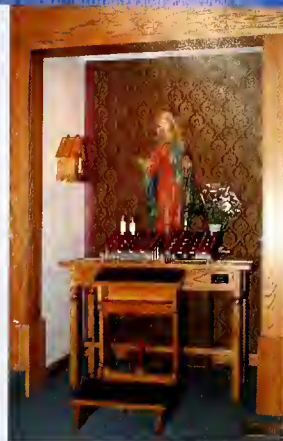
Reflections often take me to the courage of Father Damien deVeuster, who was led to minister to the lepers of Molokai in the late 19th century, while knowing the dangers involved.

I encourage all to believe in an "on-time" God who will help you instantly when called upon and to understand that "only God is in a position to look down on anyone."



# *St. Francis of Assisi*

JEFFERSON, ESTABLISHED 1963



*St. Francis of Assisi Church was originally a Presbyterian church built around 1900. It was purchased by the Diocese of Raleigh in 1962. With 400 miles of hiking trails located nearby, the St. Francis of Assisi congregation swells tremendously during the summer months.*





## MY CATHOLIC CONVERSION

by

**LORETTA S. POTTS**

St. Barnabas Church, Arden

I made my confession to the Catholic faith at age 35 at Clark Air Base, Philippines; but my conversion began in North Carolina in the form of "fire tower" experiences of reflection and growth.

I grew up in New Bern in the eastern part of North Carolina and occasionally attended the Croatan Presbyterian Church where I refused to "join" when I came of age because I knew I would only be following the crowd.

My conversion began when I dared my boyfriend to carry me up the steps of the Croatan Fire Tower. Between our laughter and my grasping for handrails, I began to see the tops of trees. When we reached the entrance landing, we both gasped. He gasped for air, but I gasped at the gently rolling landscape of the Croatan National Forest, a beauty that surrounded me on a daily basis out of which I had been unaware.

After an early marriage, I found myself pregnant and thought I had been "pretty good" to deserve a child. This arrogance ended abruptly when I took my first look at my newborn daughter, Karen Renee. I knew I had not been that good! Nine months later we

were both baptized at the First Presbyterian Church in Greenville, North Carolina. My husband did not attend. In fact, he left us two years later when I was seven months pregnant. At least I had a job and could support my family, but I knew I needed help.

I can still remember that time very clearly. I was wearing only a white dressing gown, and sitting on an examining room table waiting for the baby doctor. I prayed and begged God sincerely from the bottom of my heart for a faithful spouse and for a good father for my children. Fortunately, Rebecca Kaye's birth relieved much of the pain of divorce. Six weeks later I met Jim, a Catholic, who did not attend church. Yet, I sensed his deep faith in God. Two years later we married and his military career moved us to California, Alabama, and then South Dakota.

In South Dakota I was unable to transfer and found myself jobless, but excited about not having to work outside the home for the first time! When I went to the Presbyterian church to volunteer and enroll the girls in Vacation Bible School, they said their classes were full and they did not need an adult volunteer. All I could think of was "no room in the inn."

So I joined Jim who had begun to attend Mass. During those four years I listened carefully to the hymns and homilies and I learned about Catholicism. When Rebecca began kindergarten, I began college. During one English Literature course, I encountered Milton's "Paradise Lost" where he writes about eternal life. This time my "fire tower" experience happened in a classroom.

Later we attended Cursillo, a concentrated course in Christianity. The Cursillo was my first experience of the power of prayer and sacrifice together. After the Cursillo, I knew I must forgive everyone including myself and I was actually excited about reading the Bible!



*St. Barnabas*



When we arrived two months later at Clark Air Base, Philippines, I enrolled in Bible Study and attended RCIA for two years. One of my teachers was Father Ed Suhoza, who inspired and encouraged me to grow in my relationship with God. He was instrumental in helping me with the annulment process, after which Jim and I were married in the Catholic Church.

In 1987 Jim retired and we returned to North Carolina and began attending St. Barnabas Catholic Church in Arden. We found several couples with whom we could meet weekly to continue the sharing method offered by the Cursillo. Although the members have changed, my group has met weekly for almost eighteen years. They have been supportive many times, but especially when I lost my grandson, Lee, born much too early, and when another grandchild, Lucian, spent two months at the hospital.

About six years ago, I was called to the hospital to sit with a friend who was dying. I had prayed all the prayers I knew. I pulled rosary beads from my purse and began to say the "Hail Mary" over and over. What comfort!

Also at this time I observed a new pastor's loving respect for the Eucharist and his talent as a teacher in leading our parish into starting Eucharistic Adoration. I signed up for an hour of adoration and after only a few weeks, I experienced the healing of a

relationship that had suffered for over 20 years. This hour has become so precious!

My faith escalated when I discovered the power and the beauty of the sacrament of penance on a monthly basis, encouraged by my pastor. The more I admitted my sins, the more I became aware of other sins I had committed. The more I sought God's forgiveness and mercy, the more I experienced His grace.

As soon as my pastor introduced the prayer of the "Divine Mercy," my life changed again. After carpal tunnel injuries and later operations, this prayer eased my anxieties plus aided my transition from a librarian to a homemaker, a job I love. Now I can travel more freely, spend more time with my grandchildren, attend daily Mass, take Communion to the sick, sing in the choir, and volunteer in the church library any time I want!

Another "fire tower" experience came in May 2005 when I was blessed with a pilgrimage to Italy and Poland led by our pastor to celebrate the Year of the Eucharist. After seeing Pope Benedict in St. Peter's Square, I feel a real connection to "our Papa."

Currently, I am excited about studying the saints, especially St. Teresa of Avila, my confirmation saint, and just waiting for what God has in store for me.







## *St. Barnabas*

ARDEN, ESTABLISHED 1964



*St. Barnabas Church began in 1965 when a structure in Arden was purchased from local Baptists for use as a Catholic church. Bishop Vincent Waters of Raleigh celebrated the first Mass in November of that year. Thirty-six families made up that early church community.*

## BELMONT ABBEY 1876

by  
ABBOT PLACID SOLARI

When the Diocese of Charlotte was established in 1972, it joined two previously existing ecclesiastical jurisdictions in North Carolina, the Diocese of Raleigh, and the Abbey Nullius of Belmont. The latter, the older of the two, traced its origins to the work of the founding abbot, Bishop Leo Haid, O.S.B., who was also the first permanent resident Catholic bishop in North Carolina.

The Benedictines came to North Carolina in April of 1876 from Saint Vincent Abbey, Latrobe, Pennsylvania, to accept a donation of land in Gaston County from the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah J. O'Connell, a priest of the Charleston Diocese and inveterate missionary. The purpose of the gift was to provide for the establishment of a religious community and a "literary institution" as a focal point for the few and scattered Catholics in the western Carolinas. The new monastery became an independent abbey in 1884, and Father Leo Haid, O.S.B., was elected first abbot.



*Father David Brown, OSB, and diplomas for a Belmont Abbey College graduating class.*

The establishment of an independent abbey in North Carolina gave the Holy See an opportunity to provide a more stable organization for the small Catholic community in North Carolina, which heretofore had been too small and poor to support a resident bishop. In December 1887, Pope Leo XIII provided that Abbot Leo should be ordained bishop and assume the responsibilities of Vicar Apostolic of North Carolina, while retaining at the same time his duties as abbot. This unusual arrangement allowed the new abbot to continue to guide his struggling monastic community while, at the same time, to rely on the monastery as a secure base for his responsibilities as bishop. In 1910, the counties of Gaston, Cleveland, Catawba, Burke, McDowell, Rutherford and Polk were separated from the Vicariate Apostolic and set up as the Abbey Nullius of Belmont. Within this territory, the abbots of Belmont Abbey continued to exercise the jurisdiction of the local ordinary. Following Bishop Haid's death in 1924, a normal diocesan jurisdiction was established in the rest of the state with the erection of the Diocese of Raleigh.

In subsequent years, as the Catholic Church slowly grew in North Carolina, the territory of the Abbey Nullius was twice reduced, transferring care of the Catholic community to the Diocese of Raleigh. After 1960, the territory of the abbacy was restricted to the monastic property. Even with the much diminished responsibilities, the abbots of Belmont Abbey continued to exercise the jurisdiction of a local ordinary, a situation unique in the United States. It was because of this responsibility that Abbot Walter Coggin, O.S.B., was summoned as one of the fathers of the Second Vatican Council, and attended all four sessions of that historic synod. The far reaching changes initiated by the Council were to extend to Belmont Abbey. One of the principal themes of the Council's reflection on the Church had been the emphasis on the pastoral office of bishops and an increased appreciation of the importance of the local Church. With the increasing strength of the Diocese of Raleigh, and the establishment of the Diocese of



Charlotte in 1972, it was clear that the conditions which had drawn the Belmont monks into care of the Catholics of North Carolina had improved considerably. In 1975, the Holy See decreed that the territory of Belmont Abbey Nullius would be incorporated into the Diocese of Charlotte following the celebration of the Abbey's centennial year in 1976. On January 1, 1977, Bishop Michael Begley, a respected and cherished friend of the monastic community, welcomed the monks of Belmont Abbey into the Diocese.

The incorporation into the diocese brought the monastery back to its origins. The Benedictines had originally come to North Carolina to establish a monastery and a school. It was the request of the American hierarchy and the Holy See, as well as the pressing needs of the Catholics of the state, which had led them to stretch their resources to include an extensive project of pastoral work. The original purposes of the monastic foundation, however, had never been forgotten. Even at the height of their pastoral ministry, Bishop Haid and the monks had established four other monastic communities in the Southeast, each with a school, and each continuing in existence in the present day. Abbot Vincent Taylor, O.S.B., Belmont's second abbot, had fostered the development of a rich liturgical

life at the monastery as a significant aspect of the Abbey's unique contribution to the Church in North Carolina. It was also under his leadership that Belmont Abbey College moved to senior college status in the 1950s, joining the small handful of Catholic institutions of higher learning in the South.

Today, monks of Belmont Abbey contribute to the life of the Church in North Carolina by continuing the Benedictine tradition of seeking God by living, working and praying together in the monastery of their monastic profession for a lifetime. In addition, the Abbey continues its sponsorship of Belmont Abbey College as its principal outreach to the larger community. On every occasion that the monks transferred portions of the territory of the Abbey Nullius to the care of the diocese in the twentieth century, the monastic community was admonished to concentrate on their monastic community life and the education of youth. As the Holy See noted in the documents finalizing the incorporation of the Abbey Nullius into the Diocese of Charlotte, fidelity to Benedictine monastic life and fostering of Catholic higher education will be "the most excellent of all the treasures which the Belmont community will hand on to the new generations of North Carolina."



*Belmont Abbey*





# *Queen of the Apostles*

BELMONT, ESTABLISHED 1965



*Queen of the Apostles, established in 1965, converted the gymnasium of a boarding school for boys to a church.*







# Holy Cross

KERNERSVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1969



*Holy Cross was formed in the late 1960s. The first Mass was celebrated in a converted antiques store. On Oct. 29, 1978, Bishop Michael J. Begley dedicated a multi-purpose structure complete with seating for 325, classrooms and other facilities. On September 28, 2003 Bishop William Curlin dedicated the present church.*



*Relic of the Holy Cross*





# *St. Margaret of Scotland*

MAGGIE VALLEY, ESTABLISHED 1969



*St. Margaret of Scotland is one of several small parishes in the Diocese of Charlotte to be built by layman Michael Murphy of Detroit, who moved to North Carolina in 1950. Murphy studied for the priesthood and was ordained at the age of 80 in 1972. He served until his death in 1991 at the age of 99.*







# *St. Paul the Apostle*

GREENSBORO, ESTABLISHED 1974



*St. Paul the Apostle Church was founded in 1974. Parishioners celebrated Mass in Protestant churches and a funeral home before dedicating their own church in 1976.*







## *St. John Neumann*

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1977



*Replica of the Cross of San Damiano in Italy. St. Francis of Assisi prayed before the original cross as he received the commission from the Lord to rebuild the Church.*



*St. John Neumann Church established in 1977*



## FIAT MIHI

by

SHERRILYN TAMAYO-SIPLON

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Charlotte

*"LORD, ARE YOU REALLY SURE HE IS THE ONE? IS IT POSSIBLE THAT YOU ARE JUST KIDDING ME?"*

These were questions I asked God over and over again before I married my husband in 2000. You see, I'm one of those catching the last train. I married when my age was "no longer in the calendar," a Filipino expression that means I was getting older. At that time, I was caught between wanting to stay permanently in the United States and searching for true love. So my sister in Hayward, California suggested, "You are at the right age. Why don't you ask the Lord to send you the right man?"

And so, I did. I confided my situation to my brother who is a missionary priest in Thailand via the telephone. I told him my criteria. "There are only two requisites. First, he has to be a US citizen and second, he has to love me for what I am. I want someone as nice as St. Joseph." To which he answered "St. Joseph is old," and he laughed.

I grew up in the Philippines. In the early '80s, I became an active member of the Legion of Mary and assisted in handling a junior presidium named "Fiat Mihi." It means "Thy will be done." I had no idea that so many years later, I would own the same phrase in my life.

After the People's Revolution of 1986 in my country, a church in honor of Our Lady was built along the historic EDSA, a main road in Manila. It also housed a separate chapel for the Blessed Sacrament which people frequented. I was one of them. This started my undying love for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

The Philippines is a country rich in culture, natural resources, hardworking people, and faith. But it is also immersed in poverty and corruption. What it lacks in its strong financial muscles, it makes up in its unwavering faith in God.

In December of 1994, I was able to find a petitioner for employment, but it was a job that I detest-

ed. It enabled me, though, to stay here legally for a few more years. Four years later, I was blessed to sing in a choir close to downtown Los Angeles. The church's name is Our Lady of Loretto. I did not have the most beautiful voice in the choir, but I volunteered to sing the responsorial psalm. I vocalized and practiced every Sunday morning before the Mass because I wanted to sing my best for the Lord to help touch the hearts of the Mass-goers.

Living alone in LA was hard. I had friends but I felt so alone, fearful, lost and empty. I succumbed to relationships that I really did not want, just to fill the void within me. In a few months, the choir helped me feel better and saved me from destructive relationships. I found new friends and a family who cherished and nurtured the person that I am. Together, we sang every Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m. Cory and Ana told me that everybody who went to sing in the choir had their prayers answered.

As I continued my service in the choir, a phone call came from Charlotte, North Carolina in May 1999. It was from Roy, who thanked me for the Mass card I sent for his deceased wife. She was a good friend of mine. One phone call led to another.

The choir and my family continued praying for the right partner for me. Months passed and "signs" along the way led to Roy as the answer to my heart's desire. But still, I bargained with God. "Lord, are you sure that he is the one? There must be some kind of misinterpretation," I would tell God. "I asked for someone as nice as St. Joseph, not as old as St. Joseph."

Roy visited me in Los Angeles. Roy looked fit compared to when I saw him six years ago. He had a round smiling face, well built physique with strong muscles. However, he was also 25 years older than me.



Upon Roy's invitation, I flew to Charlotte on December 17, 1999. During the weekend Mass God hit me with a powerful message. The homily was about the Annunciation — about Mary's "yes" to be the Mother of Jesus despite her lack of complete understanding of the angel's message. The priest asked, "Whom do you trust, men or God?"

At that point, I became oblivious of the entire congregation. I felt that God was only talking to me. I was afraid to accept Roy. "What would people say when they see us together?" Yet, Roy is God's gift to me. I responded, "I cannot trust men, I cannot trust God, I cannot even trust myself." I cried throughout the entire Mass.

Filled with remorse and thankfulness, I finally said my fiat. Like Mary, I did not completely understand what I was getting into, but all I knew was that

God knew what was best for me. "For if I cannot trust God, whom else will I trust?" It was like St. Peter saying, "If not to you Lord, where else shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). I left the church at peace with my decision of marrying Roy.

Looking back, I believe St. Gabriel was also instrumental in telling me that Roy was God's choice. The message was delivered in St. Gabriel Church along Providence Road, where Roy works as a maintenance/custodian up to the present and where we were also wed on July 8, 2000.

My life is now heaven compared to my life in Los Angeles. I obeyed God's wish and Roy and I are blessed with a happy, healthy, rambunctious toddler. His name is Roy Joseph, two names I am proud to give my son.



## WHAT I LEARNED AT THE SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS CHRISTMAS EVE CHILDREN'S MASS

by

JEANNIE MARENDT DeSENA

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Charlotte

**A**s morning drew nigh on December 24, 2004, I would have loved a few more minutes to sleep in heavenly peace. But the cries of 6-week-old William Pierce DeSena again pierced the silent night. It was just as well. After feeding that sweet little boy, I needed to stir up the batter for a very big batch of birthday waffles. Daughter Grace came into the world eight years before, and we always made sure to devote at least the first part of the day to her family birthday celebration. Once the afternoon came, we would change our focus to Jesus' birthday and getting ready for the Christmas Eve children's Mass at our parish church, St. Thomas Aquinas in Charlotte.

We were expecting a crowd around the breakfast table. Not only would Grace be joined by her parents, two sisters and new brother, but also her two baby cousins and the whole DeSena clan, some of whom could be with us for only a few hours. We had a whole lot of festivity to fit into our day.

Our home was happily chaotic, and I felt extremely, self-importantly busy. We all knew the Reason for the season, but I must admit that the babe in the manger was edged out of my thoughts by the baby in my arms and his two cousins. Grace was opening gifts, babies were bouncing on their parents' knees and in their musical bouncer seats, my older children were trying to get their cousins' attention, and CNN was keeping my father-in-law up to the minute with the events of the day.

When the telephone added its musical ring to the din, I answered with a cheery, "Merry Christmas!" Our friend and parish priest, the Rev. Stan Kobel, O.F.M. Cap., was on the line. Father Stan asked if our family planned to attend the 4:30 p.m. children's Mass at St. Thomas. I told him we did. He then invited us to take part in the opening procession and place the baby in the manger of the large Nativity scene next to the tabernacle. The youngest member of the family usually carries the baby, he said.

What an honor. Yet my heart beat wildly as I nervously pictured 4-year-old Madeleine with her newborn brother walking up the long center aisle. She might drop him. I had never allowed her to hold him while standing up, much less carry him a long distance. A few years before, another big sister and her family's new baby had played Mary and baby Jesus during the sermon of the children's Mass, but that girl was much older... and that baby wasn't mine.

Those thoughts were noisy in my head, but I allowed Father Stan to continue instead of voicing my concerns immediately. I'm glad I did. Soon it was clear that he was inviting Madeleine to carry the beautiful hand-painted baby Jesus to join the other figures around the crèche. I happily accepted.

As the day continued, we orchestrated the little ones' naptimes and feedings, ever mindful of the upcoming Mass. And before we left, we sat all six cousins in front of the Christmas tree for a photograph. ("Picture torture," my kids call it.) Olivia, Grace and Madeleine, in their matching red velveteen dresses with white Peter Pan collars and black leather Mary Janes, each held a baby. By coincidence, William and Robert were wearing tiny Santa suits; baby Melea's outfit was red and ruffy. Babies grabbed the girls' long hair as their parents waved and squeaked toys to get their attention. Santa hats slid down over eyes, and wildly kicking baby feet sent red booties flying. Three photographers and one videographer captured the melee as the onlooking adults roared with laughter. Of course, the babies ended up in tears. But my mother-in-law got the photo she hoped for, and we got out the door on time... or close enough.

The church was dark except for the lights on the trees around the stable – and surprisingly quiet considering the scores of excited little people in the pews. Like the church, I was not as calm as I might have appeared at first glance. We were early enough for Mass, but I felt as if we had skidded and screeched in the

door. I had thrown on my own dress and shoes, focusing time and energy on arranging children's hair bows and outfits for the photograph. And I was still lamenting the way I had snapped at my brother-in-law as he tried to give me advice about my camera. My husband, Curtis, and I spent the minutes before the procession making sure Madeleine did not drop and break the valuable Italian figure of Jesus, which was quite heavy and almost life-size. And then it was time to begin.

Madeleine walked slowly up the center aisle, holding baby Jesus high in the air so all could see him, just as Father Stan had directed her. She was, in a small way, a Christ-bearer, a herald of His coming.

At the crèche, Father Stan's words drew me in and helped settle me for the Mass. He reminded us to keep our eyes on the Babe in the manger, and he prayed that we would have His peace. I needed to hear those words, and our family's role in the Christmas Eve Mass gave me new insight into their meaning. Like Madeleine holding baby Jesus as high as her 4-year-old arms would reach, we should proudly proclaim Jesus on Christmas and every day. And just as the congregation watched the procession move up the center aisle, we must keep our eyes on Jesus – on the Tabernacle, on the manger scene, on the crucified Christ.

As I heeded that message, all else truly fell away for me – the stresses of holiday cleaning and preparation, the middle-of-the-night feedings of our hungry infant, the petty annoyances that come when family members gather.

I didn't expect to learn much during the children's sermon, "The ABCs of Christmas," but it had a message for me. The letter "I" was for innkeeper, and playing that role was an energetic little boy dressed in a brown stretchy robe much too big for him. He zoomed up the aisle and circled erratically about the general area where he was to stand – until he flat-out fell on the floor. Father Stan ad-libbed smoothly, commenting how busy the innkeeper was, hurrying about with much to do. Back on his feet, the boy fiddled with the sash that was holding up the extra length of his robe until both fell around his feet. Then he raised his shoulders high, and the robe with them, until his head was covered, too.

Instead of detracting from the sermon, for me he was the most important part of it. I realized that often, instead of walking straight to the manger and keeping my eyes on Jesus, I'm like that funny little innkeeper, spinning myself in circles on a variety of tasks until I fall on the ground, collapsing from my vain attempts to do too much under only my own power – whether or not the task was worth doing in the first place. Thank you, little innkeeper, for being the mirror in which I could see myself.

When I reach inside for my memories of Christmas 2004, here are my treasures:

A series of snapshots of six DeSena grandchildren dressed in red and together at the tree.

The image of my dear parish church, dimly lit, as my four-year-old proudly carried the Christ Child to the manger. And two brown-robed fellows who helped turn my eyes toward my Savior.







# St. Thomas Aquinas

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1978



*The stained glass windows at St. Thomas Aquinas were originally crafted for the St. Francis Seminary in Newton, New Jersey.*



*Fr. "Hard-Hat" Joseph Zuschmidt at groundbreaking, 1984.*



# PEACE BE WITH YOU

by

**MIKE POLLOCK**

Holy Family Church, Clemmons

Peace be with you  
I say to my brother, my sister in Mass  
But it is not just a greeting, a gesture, a phrase  
It is a prayer, invoking God's will  
That we may walk in his ways

The shy must shrug all fear  
Be threatened not by rejection  
So that they may embrace the Church  
Accepting the role of brother's keeper  
Will bring the peace for which they search

Peace be with you  
Lives outside the church, in the streets  
A silent prayer I offer to a passing stranger  
That he'll see Christ  
And walk tall in the face of danger

Operating as a secret agent  
Running interference  
Against misery and defeat  
To strengthen God's children  
Fallen prey to deceit

Peace be with you  
For peace is synonymous with Christ  
In Him is no fear, no anxiety, or condemnation  
True peace is not of this earth  
Mired in its own frustration

Huddled behind locked doors  
The disciples were visited by the Resurrected  
Doubt and fear replaced by peace  
Filled with breath of the Holy Spirit  
World of darkness cease

Peace be with you  
Is the action of the righteous  
Responding to God's call  
A response to the prayer  
Echoed by us all

To become one of the vessels  
Enshrined within the answer  
To the prayer that one asks  
Bearing yoke that is light  
Undertaking God's tasks

Peace be with you  
You see the words for what they are  
For now has come the day  
You will worship with your brothers  
When you hear this prayer they pray



*Holy Family Church*





## *Holy Family*

CLEMMONS, ESTABLISHED 1978



*Bishop John Donoghue dedicated Holy Family Church in 1985.  
It was his first church dedication as Bishop of Charlotte.*



## REMEMBERING MSGR. RICHARD ALLEN

by

ISMINI FRIESER

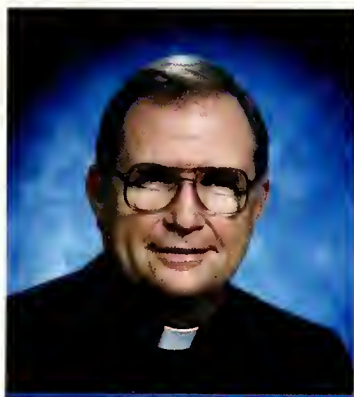
St. Joseph Church, Newton

The village of Talkeetna, Alaska is nestled at the foothill of Mt. McKinley. It is the home of St. Bernard Catholic Church. The last Sunday of July 2002, Fr. Richard Hokanson, who was then pastor of Queen of the Apostles Church in Belmont, and I journeyed to the church, a log cabin topped by a cross.

At the entrance of the church, a broad-shouldered priest with silver hair stood erect, welcoming the worshippers. As soon as the two priests spotted each other, amazement lit their eyes, and a wide smile crossed their faces. We were aware that Msgr. Richard Allen had moved to Alaska to minister scattered flocks, but we had no idea of his whereabouts. Running into him in a remote village of 350 inhabitants, in a state twice the size of Texas, on a Sunday when he was celebrating Mass, Msgr. Allen came to St. Bernard only twice a month, could only have been God's plan. As for Msgr. Allen, did he ever imagine that we would find him in the tiny village of Takeetna, thousands of miles from Charlotte? Joyfully he greeted us.

Some twenty residents and thirty tourists gathered in the church. We settled in folding chairs, and I took a few minutes to survey the environment. A table draped in a white cloth served as an altar with a primitive crucifix, a plaster statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, a podium and a piano. In this sober setting I communed with the simple and enduring soul of a parish that survived in hardship and isolation.

In a clear, slow voice, Msgr. Allen celebrated the Eucharist. Throughout the Mass, his face, his movements, his voice radiated his deep love for God and the serenity of a man attuned to the solitude of this distant land and its people. After delivering a well-prepared homily, he proudly introduced his parishioners: the mechanics, the merchants and the farmers of the area. He singled out Renamary, an energetic middle-aged woman whose light brown hair



*Monsignor Richard Allen  
1930-2005*

framed her determined face. She volunteers her time to administer the church. She performs marriages, presides at funerals, baptizes, organizes the activities, and even plays the piano. In this small community, I felt the warmth of a faith as beautiful and mysterious as the snowy peaks and deep forests that encompassed it. It is a faith kept alive by Msgr. Allen's love and generosity. After the Mass, there was no time for socializing as Msgr. Allen was heading for the next parish, an hour's drive away, to celebrate his fourth Mass of the

weekend. In the evening, he would celebrate the fifth, then go back to Anchorage where he was stationed.

Retiring was not a word in Father Allen's vocabulary. A few years ago, at age 70, after a life of selfless dedication to parish work in the Charlotte diocese, he could have chosen to drift into a quiet and pleasant retirement. Instead he chose a challenging life, spreading the Gospel to Alaskans living in remote villages. Relentlessly, during the dark lengthy winters, when it got to 40 degrees below or colder, and the roads were blanketed in white, and rain and wind whipped the valleys, he crisscrossed the countryside, sustaining people's faith in parishes hundreds of miles apart. He regularly visited the Aleutian Islands, a chain of foggy windswept islands, to celebrate 25 Masses in one week. At any time, he responded to the calls of the parishes that needed help, wherever they were. In spite of the hardships, the sacrifices, and the weight of the years, he was a man at peace with himself, reflecting the sacred beauty of Christianity.

I came back from our trip, my heart filled with gratitude and wonder. Among my fondest memories is our visit to St. Bernard's where, thanks to God's providence, I had the privilege of meeting a priest who, at the twilight of his life, was walking a path of self-denial to bring God's grace to the isolated people of a faraway land.





# St. Joseph

NEWTON, ESTABLISHED 1978



*St. Joseph Church was established in 1978. In 2002, a devastating fire damaged some of the building. It was rebuilt and rededicated by Bishop William Curlyn in June of 2003.*





# Holy Spirit

DENVER, ESTABLISHED 1979



*Holy Spirit began as a mission church celebrating Mass in an Episcopal Church on Lake Norman, and later in an Optimist hall. The present facility, a former elementary school, was purchased from Lincoln County. The first Mass was celebrated in the renovated school on Christmas day of 1988.*







## *St. Andrew the Apostle*

MARS HILL, ESTABLISHED 1981

*St. Andrew the Apostle was established by Jesuit Father Andrew Graves, who arrived in Madison County in 1937. Father Graves assumed a pastorate in a town where very few Catholics resided and questions about the faith abounded. Father Graves became known for leading a pioneering ministry of ecumenism in the years preceding the Second Vatican Council.*





## MOVING TO WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

by

PEGGY GEIGER

St. Matthew Church, Charlotte

I brought my faith from the metropolitan New York area when we moved here to Charlotte almost fourteen years ago. We belong to a universal Church, but regional differences influence how we see ourselves as Catholics and our experience of "church."

In western North Carolina, I felt shocked when I witnessed gross misunderstanding about and blatant bigotry against the Catholic Church. I recall billboards on back roads proclaiming anti-Catholic messages.

Much of this comes from a lack of familiarity with the Catholic faith and misconceptions that have been encountered by not living next door to practicing Catholics. I'd never viewed myself as evangelizing about Catholicism, but in western North Carolina, opportunities come knocking at my door. When coworkers attend a Catholic funeral or nuptial Mass, they often approach me to talk about their experience. One of my students was very active in an evangelical church. He asked me whether I belonged to a church, which led to a discussion about worship. I talked about the significance of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. During Pope John Paul's last illness and the election of Pope Benedict, various people wandered into my office or started conversations in the hallway about what was happening. I even gave several coworkers prayer cards from Pope John Paul's memorial Mass. I would have never done something like that up north!

"Where will we go to church?" was one of the first questions we addressed when we moved to Charlotte in 1991. We quickly found St. Matthew. At the time, we celebrated Mass in the parish center gymnasium. What the parish lacked in spiritually uplifting physical facilities, it made up for with lively worship and an experience of church community. Our son attended the Sunday morning preschool and we became extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

This experience of immediate church community was new to us. We had been active in our previ-

ous parishes, but truly belonging to the parish community came slowly. In those well-established parishes, there was a tendency for the active parishioners to become a bit inbred and cliquish. This wasn't a deliberate effort to exclude newcomers, but it built a barrier to experiencing church as community.

Here, the question is "How do you want to help?" When we first joined St. Matthew, there were no barriers to involvement. Now it's a very large parish, yet all new parishioners are encouraged to become involved. With over 100 ministries, there's no excuse for not becoming an active part of parish life. Unfortunately, it is easy to stay unnoticed because we are so large.

The experience of instant church community extended beyond St. Matthew. When we moved here, we were a presenting team for Marriage Encounter. As part of our commitment, we gave pulpit talks inviting couples to experience a Marriage Encounter weekend. We often spent an entire Sunday morning at a parish, talking at all the Masses. In New Jersey, many pastors were reluctant to let us speak at Mass. After Mass, we would stand in the back with brochures and try to get people to take them home. Often, people avoided us. If a couple stopped to talk, it was usually because they had experienced a Marriage Encounter weekend.

In the Charlotte diocese, almost every pastor we approached agreed to let us come and speak at Mass. We traveled throughout the diocese and were warmly welcomed at every church. People stopped to talk after Mass, thanking us for coming. Even people who weren't married took the brochures, often commenting that they planned to pass it on to a married couple. Parishioners insisted that we join them for coffee and donuts served after Mass. On a number of these trips, we invited the priest out for Sunday dinner and when he agreed, spent a couple of pleasant hours in conversation over a good meal.



The pastor in Bryson City invited us to come. He convinced a local couple to talk with us about the possibility of a Marriage Encounter weekend in that area, although this couple had not experienced a Marriage Encounter weekend. The couple welcomed us into their home. In the course of the discussion, the husband mentioned taking a basket-weaving course. Up north, a course with few requirements and little worth is often referred to as a basket-weaving course. I wondered to myself "Why is he wasting his time?" Then, he showed us his baskets, which were works of art, the designs coming from his Cherokee heritage. We were clearly a long way from New York City.

The priest insisted that we stay at the rectory. He treated us to an elaborate formal dinner at one of the local inns. He wanted to honor us as his guests. The next morning, we spoke at both morning Masses. Our young son was with us and the pastor suggested that we just bring him up with us when we spoke. The congregation was small; the interior of the church would fit inside of St. Matthew's sanctuary about 10 times. The people received us as if we were doing them a favor by coming to speak to them.

In western North Carolina, I've experienced a taste of the early Church. It's spirit-filled, vibrant, welcoming, and expanding. It's hard to be a lukewarm Catholic.



*St. Matthew Church, Charlotte*

## A JOURNEY TO CATHOLICISM

by

**REVA PERKINS**

St. Matthew Church, Charlotte

**B**orn a Hindu, I was subject to the many pagan rituals and beliefs of my family. Even as a child, in my heart I did not accept the Hindu gods, who married many wives in what seemed to be immoral behavior of gods consorting with many spouses. I am not sure how my heart rejected what I considered wrong depictions of holiness and salvation. It's hard to

believe that a child would know. Yet, when I reflect back, it is astounding even to me that I reacted that way. But you see, when God has a plan for you, He works in wonderful ways.

Being from a strict Hindu family, I was expected, by my father, to have the proper Hindu education.

So, it's a miracle in itself that I went to a Catholic school. It was God's hand in my life. In spite of my father's vehement objections, my sister and I enrolled in the Auxilium Convent High School (in India, schools normally run from Kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade). School was wonderful. We had morning prayer, an opportunity to pray in chapel during lunch and prayer after lunch to take us through the rest of the day. I loved the prayers and the joy I felt in the connection. I did not understand the spiritual meaning or what I was called upon to do, but I still remember I felt joy and the love in my heart when I prayed.

The daily prayers, the novena for our graduating class and the rosaries, these all propelled me to Christ and Our Eternal Father. I remember our nuns talking to us about the great love God has for us. This was so unlike and in stark contrast to the Hindu ritual which I felt had no meaning and substance. In school, I had a direct connection with God, and he loved me and looked after me. At home, it was a lot of ritual with no meaning. I was drawn to the Church more and more. Our nuns had a hand in this, especially one special nun. I fondly remember her, our Mother Superior, a most holy, kind and gentle soul who was taken away from us suddenly when her habit caught an oncoming train as she stood on the platform and dragged her down to her death. I still remember and feel the pain and sadness of losing her. She was the one who saw me peeking into the chapel out of curiosity and took my hand to lead me into the chapel to sit with her in silent prayer, feeling the love of God. This kind gesture was the start of my visits to the school chapel during lunch where I spent time feeling the peace and love of God.

But my connection and lifelong devotion to Our Holy Mother did not come until I saw the film "Lady of Fatima" at the age of 8 on one of many field trips with our Sisters. I was spellbound and hooked. From that point on, she was my spiritual guardian. She has interceded for me many a time during my school years and throughout my life. My life at home was hard, mainly because I could not adopt the teachings of Hinduism. In my heart I knew the truth. Although I could not speak out loud, I carried God in my heart. I often stood out as different and strange amidst the Hindu culture.



*St. Matthew Church, Charlotte*

Because of the intense pressures in Indian society, I was married in an arranged marriage to an Indian man and later came to the United States. He went back to India but I refused to go. For the first time in my life I felt free. But my time was not at hand. My parents, fearing I would be "lost" in the corrupt and sinful world of America, came here to live with me. Cultural and religious pressures remained.

Fortunately, with God's help I met a Southern Baptist man. Over my father's opposition and objections, I married him in a church ceremony and our marriage remains strong after 25 years. Although I became a born again Christian, after my marriage there was a hole in my heart. There was something terribly missing.

In 2003, I started to pray to Our Holy Mother and she responded and told me to go back to the faith I knew and loved, the one true apostolic faith of the Catholic Church. She is truly my Mother and without her guidance, I wonder where I would be today. Yes, I used the word "told" because that is what literally happened. Every time I prayed, that was her message. "I will take care of you, but it's time for you to acknowledge my Son in the Eucharist." I obeyed because of my love for her, and as she loves her Son, I love Him with her; I feel her joys, her sorrows, her burdens and her sacrifice. I stand with her at the foot of the cross and share her sorrow. It took me a couple of months, but I obeyed. I contacted the local church and here I am.

With the help of my church and our wonderful priests, I am a newly baptized Catholic (Dec 2004) and blessed with God's love and mercy

This has truly been a life long journey. It has taken 60 years of my life, but it has been worth it. I am home. That is all that matters. My loving, caring mother has brought me home.





# St. Matthew

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1986



*The St. Matthew Parish celebrated its first Mass in a local cinema in 1986. The present church is the largest in the Diocese of Charlotte.*



*Monsignor Joseph Keru and Bishop Donoghue shortly after land was purchased in what was then a sparsely populated part of Mecklenburg County, 1980s.*



## CHURCH FAMILY FOR A PHILLY TRANSPLANT

by  
**PAT HOARE**  
Seminararian

The question follows quickly when I tell a person my background: "You're a Philly boy! Why are you studying to be a priest for the Diocese of Charlotte?"

It's a natural question, isn't it? It is a question that has been asked by many people of themselves in some form or fashion in the past 35 years. The diocese has grown substantially, and the lion's share of that growth is from "non-Charlotteans," whether they be from Philly, or New York, or Chicago, or Indiana, or Mexico, or El Salvador. They come to Western North Carolina for work, for opportunity, for a chance at something for which they continue to search. When they arrive, like I did in March 1995, they find themselves in a strange place, with customs, traditions, and language unlike anything they have known. They may know only a few people, or they may know no one. They are drawn to the one thing familiar to them, the one thing that provides them comfort and identity in an unknown world – the Catholic Church.

When I arrived at St. Matthew in March, 1995, I was unknown. The Mass was the same, but it was in a gym, not a church building. The songs were familiar,

but the need to stack up the chairs after the recessional hymn was a new experience. I was strangely attracted to this place. Hundreds of Catholics, "away from home," joined together in a search for family and a search for God.

My faith grew through these people. I came to know them, and I came to realize God's providence in bringing me to them and them to me. We became instruments on our respective roads to Emmaus, and our love for God grew through our love for one another.

When I began to hear God's call to be a priest, I left the diocese for a short period to be "sure" that I should study for Charlotte and not Philadelphia. I came to realize that Charlotte was indeed my "home," not because of blood family, but because of God's family. As I prepare for the priesthood, I look forward to serving not only those whom I have met in the past 10 years working in the diocese, but even more to serving those who, like I once did, will arrive in Western Carolina looking for a home. I hope that we, together, can prepare for them the Perfect House, the Father's House.

*St. Matthew Church, Charlotte*







## St. Luke

MINT HILL, ESTABLISHED 1987



*St. Luke Church in Mint Hill was established in 1987 to respond to rapid growth in suburban Charlotte. Before moving to its permanent home, Masses took place at a movie theatre.*

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE "BLACK" AND "CATHOLIC"

by

SANDY MURDOCK

Director, Diocesan African American Affairs Ministry

To be "Black" in the Catholic Church is definitely to be a minority. To be "Catholic" in the southern United States is also to be a minority. American Heritage College Dictionary defines "minority" as "a racial, religious, or other group regarded as different from the group of which it is a part." This definition gives a definite meaning to the word "minority" and the resultant environment in which one exists; the place in society one holds; the community in which one lives; the job that one is deemed qualified to hold; the higher education institute one is accepted in as a student; the leadership roles one is enlisted to hold, and the list goes on and on.

I converted to Catholicism from a Protestant church 30 years ago. The transition has been interesting. I came from a "Black" church to a predominantly "White" church, as there were only six black families attending the Catholic Church I joined in Charlotte. We were enlisted to pay DSA and provide a dish for the Fall Festival. But when it was time for the Valentine Dance, we were never invited or asked to purchase tickets or attend. There was no socialization for the Black families in this parish. My daughter received First Communion along with one other child of color, and neither family was made aware that there was to be a reception following the Mass. The Sister in charge only gave us information that we "had to have" and it was not given to us in a timely manner. My child's First Communion was not the wonderful experience it should have been because she did not feel a part of the group and she was definitely treated as a minority.

Over the years, my experiences have varied. In some regards, I feel that we have made some inroads into "acceptance" within the Catholic Church. In a few of our churches we are allowed to celebrate the Mass in the spirit of our "Black" cultures. This, however, is still frowned upon in churches other than those that are predominantly "Black." In non-predominantly Black churches, we are made to feel that we are not

important; that the issues and concerns facing our Black community are not a matter of the Church – that we are "one" and no significant difference should be made whatever the circumstances. Multi-culturalism is the "way of the day." Therefore, we can merge all of the cultures together and give recognition to whichever aspect of the various cultures we feel most comfortable. As a Black Catholic, it is my belief that the Church must commit itself to the freedom and growth of African-Americans as full participants in church and society.

The following quote from Ansel Augustine, Director of Youth Ministry, St. Peter Claver Church, New Orleans, LA, summarizes quite empathically what it means to be "Black and Catholic."

"Some people say that we as Black Catholics have a philosophy that may seem to go against the flow of mainstream Catholicism. I'm not saying that we are not Catholic. No, we are definitely Catholic, but we are Black and Catholic. That is a whole other world within the wonderful faith that we practice. As Black Catholics we share the notion that everyone, young and old have a place at God's table. We worship with our hands, feet, mouths, and the rest of our body. We realize that our youth are a vibrant part of our church and our elderly are the foundation of our faith. With all of these aspects, Christ is at the center of all we do. ... God is different for different cultures. Who Jesus is, is preached differently in different churches. The notion of Savior is one that is culturally rooted... to truly praise Christ we must respect all of the cultures that He created."

I resolve myself to the fact that things do change, and I am willing to believe that this change is forthcoming within the Catholic Church. While it may take many more years, longer than I may live to see, I have the faith that "all things are possible through Christ."





## *St. John Lee Korean*

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1995



*St. John Lee is a Korean martyr. He was executed for his Catholic beliefs in 1867. Pope John Paul II declared him a saint in 1984. A small Catholic Korean community began meeting in Charlotte in 1980.*

*Bishop William Curlin dedicated St. John Lee Church 1995.*



*Bishop John Donoghue with Confirmation class, 1992.*



## REFLECTIONS AT OSPREY NEST

by  
**DARLENE PEARSON**  
St. Mark Church, Huntersville

*REFLECTIONS ON 1 KINGS 19: 9-13; PSALM 85: 9-14; AND MATTHEW 17: 22-27*

I'm sitting here in the nearly-silent, early-Sunday-morning hours of the first day of a week of family vacation at a wonderful vacation rental home called the Osprey's Nest on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. These are not vacations that we could take living in Ohio, but now that we live in the Carolinas it is possible. It is a wonderful time to reflect on the Word of God. When the Lord has blessed me with time and a place to listen, to really listen to His Word, there could not be more appropriate Scriptures for this place and time.

In 1 Kings, Elijah hears the winds and sees their devastating effects. He sees the earthquakes and the fire, but the Lord was not in the wind, earthquake or fire. The Lord was in the "tiny whispering sound." It was when Elijah heard the "tiny whispering sound" that he hid his face and knew that he was in the presence of God.

This passage from 1 Kings is so much like our life. We think, want, and expect that God is in the fierce wind, the earthquake, and the firestorm.



*St. Mark, Huntersville*



We have a tendency to think He is in all the big, bad, momentous occasions. We think God is somehow involved in those things that are negative in our lives that we've created apart from God, but God is not in the bad relationships that are like the earthquakes that rock our world. He is not in our negative, abrasive, and sometimes abusive speech that is like the strong fierce wind. He is not in the loss of job, security, self, or soul that we experience in life that are all like devastating fires. God isn't in any of these negative things. He's in the tiny whispering sound that comes after these bad occasions, if we will but listen for his tiny whispering voice given to us in His Word.

Being here in these outer reaches of the Carolina coast is where and when I actually have time to listen to the "tiny whispering" away from all the wind, fire, and earthquakes of everyday life. What a blessing this time is. It's like going to God as Elijah did when he heard the "tiny whispering" sound. It is truly beautiful to be here on the coast of the Carolinas just as it is to be in the wonderful green of the spring or snowy Carolina mountains in winter.

Then in Psalm 85: 9-14, it is amazing how closely related to 1 Kings these verses of the Psalm are: "I will listen for the word of God, surely the Lord will proclaim peace to his people, to the faithful, to those who trust him.... The Lord will surely grant abundance... prosperity will march before the Lord, and good fortune will march behind." These good things come from listening to the "tiny whispering" and following the voice of the Lord. The good things don't come from the fierce winds, earthquakes, and devastating fires, nor from paying attention to those things as they happen around us. We don't grow and prosper from paying too much attention to the coming hurricane, nor the tsunami, nor the terrorists in London or the insurgents in Iraq. For peace, we need just listen to that "tiny whispering" sound of the Lord that we hear in his creation.

And then, there is Peter in the verses in Matthew 17. He was so caught up in the strong wind and crashing waves of life that although Jesus was right there with him, he didn't realize it. He and the other disciples thought Jesus was but a ghost. And so, Peter put Jesus to the test. Not Jesus putting Peter to the

test, but the other way around. Peter said (in effect), if you are the Lord, let me come to you on the water in the crashing waves; and Jesus said one calm, quiet, almost whispering word, "come." Jesus let Peter's freewill drive the situation. And, Peter was able to walk on the water while he believed, while he had faith. But, when Peter lost faith, not based on Jesus walking away or pulling back, but based on Peter's loss of faith in himself and Jesus, he sank and became fearful, flailing in the water. Jesus was there all along. Peter wasn't listening to that "tiny whispering sound." He was too caught up in the wind and the crashing waves of those moments. He lost sight of Jesus for just an instant, but when he said, "Lord, save me," the quiet calm came back and Jesus stretched out his hand to save Peter.

How like Peter most of us are – oh we of little faith! Lord save us from ourselves and our unbelief. Stretch out your hand to us today and always. Give us the wisdom and the awareness to grasp for your outstretched hand. Let us focus on your "tiny whispering" voice and not on this world of trouble or on our world of troubles. Help us to have more than faith. Help us to have a living faith by listening to your "tiny whispering" voice in all the beauty you have created here for us in our mountains and our seascapes here in these Carolinas!



*St. Mark, Huntersville*

## WHY I'M CATHOLIC: THE TRUE, THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

by  
**FATHER TIMOTHY S. REID**  
Parochial Vicar,  
St. Mark Church, Huntersville

Several years ago during my senior of college, I made the best and most important decision of my life: I decided to convert to Catholicism. As a child I belonged to a small Methodist church near our family home in Indiana and it was there that I received an education in the fundamentals of Christianity. While I also learned to love God and neighbor amongst the good people in that country chapel, it wasn't until I was in college that I really began to take my faith seriously.

During the first exciting days of college life, I made several new friends who were "born-again" Christians. Over the weeks and months of that crucial first semester of college, these new friends encouraged me to go deeper in my faith. I was taught the necessity of being "saved," and in my heart developed a hunger for something transcendent, something divine. Finally, at the outset of the following semester, on a cold and snowy January night, I prayed to receive Jesus Christ into my heart. I was now "saved" and totally committed to following Christ, no matter what the cost.

Throughout the following years of college, my faith and knowledge of the Lord increased as I steadfastly devoted myself to prayer and study of the Bible. However, there were times when I felt limited by my church. I kept wondering if there was something more to Christianity. The services at the evangelical church that I attended were emotionally stimulating, but they seemed to lack depth and transcendence. As I engaged in conversations and debates with friends in other denominations, I began to wonder which Christian denomination or form of Christianity was the "right" one. Was one brand of Christianity better or more right than others? Everyone seemed to have his or her own opinion about various passages of Scripture and Christian beliefs, but I wanted to know what God believed.

As I entered my senior year, a Catholic friend dared me to take a more intellectual and historical approach to Christianity. He told me that if I were truly serious about my quest for truth, then I should study the history and beliefs of the Catholic Church. This was truly a challenge because I had developed some anti-Catholic sentiments during my college years, and I had actually encouraged Catholic friends to leave the Church. Not one to shrink from such a challenge, I plunged into history books and books written by Catholic converts. I was introduced to Augustine and Aquinas and other doctors and fathers of the Church, men who before had only been footnotes in my historical formation. What I found amazed me: there was indeed a right form of Christianity, and it was the very type of Christianity that I had attacked and ridiculed! Here was a Church that not only claimed to have the truth, but to possess the fullness of the truth, and it had the historical basis to bolster its claims. After much prayer, study, and honest-to-goodness soul-searching, I came to the realization that if I were to remain a Christian and still maintain intellectual integrity, I had to convert to Catholicism.

What exactly convinced me to convert? In the beginning my reason for converting to Catholicism was primarily intellectual. However, as I began to experience Catholicism firsthand, I realized that Catholicism had much more to offer than just what I found in history or theology books. I found within Catholicism the depth and transcendence that I so earnestly desired but had never known in my practice of Christianity. I found richness in my faith that I had never known but that seemed so appropriate. In short, I converted to Catholicism because Catholicism is beautiful, it's good, and it's true.

There is a beauty to Catholicism that is unparalleled in the faith world. The beauty that Catholicism possesses is a beauty that is derived from God, who is Beauty itself. Catholicism possesses a beauty that is



evident to the senses in the way that we celebrate our liturgy, in the way we build our grand churches and cathedrals, in the inspiration that our faith gives to the arts. Have you ever gazed upon the splendor of Chartes Cathedral or Notre Dame de Paris? Have you ever admired the art in the Sistine Chapel or the Pietà in St. Peter's? These works of beauty are all expressions of the Catholic faith!

But there is also a beauty in the logical nobility of all that we hold and believe as a Church. There is a beauty in our traditions passed down for two thousand years, in our piety and in our devotions – especially those that center on Our Lady and the saints. Catholicism can never be accused of being sterile or lifeless. While some may not agree with what we do and believe, there can be no doubt that Catholicism is beautiful!

Catholicism is also good and the goodness that Catholicism possesses is derived from God, who is Goodness itself. The Catholic Church reflects the goodness of God like a prism held up to the light that reveals all the colors of the spectrum. The Church is Jesus' Mystical Body and, therefore, She shows forth His goodness like none other.

The goodness of Catholicism shines forth through our teachings on human dignity and in our charitable works. No institution, organization, church or religious group on earth can even come close to matching the charitable works done by Catholic schools, hospitals, agencies and institutions. And no institution, organization, church or religious group on earth defends and upholds the dignity of human life in the same comprehensive and unadulterated fashion as does the Catholic Church.

The goodness of Catholicism shines forth even more spectacularly through our sacramental system through which Holy Mother Church feeds, heals, reconciles and nourishes her children. The sacraments, God's most precious gifts, given to us by Christ Himself to make us holy, have been preserved fully only within Catholicism. And that is very good indeed!

Lastly, and most importantly, I am Catholic because Catholicism is true. Before Christ died He founded a Church on earth, and history bears witness to the fact that the Church founded by Christ Himself is none other than the Catholic Church. Moreover, we know by faith that the full revelation of Christ's truth has been entrusted to and preserved whole and entire by the Catholic Church. While all churches and faith communities possess some share of the truth, only the Catholic Church possesses the fullness of truth.

The truth that Catholicism possesses is derived from God, who is Truth itself. This truth was first given to the apostles, and it has been systematically handed down from generation to generation to today. This truth has been enshrined in our teachings and beliefs as Catholics, and it is given voice in our prayers and liturgies.

Furthermore, the truth of Catholic teaching is evident in the fact that our teaching is unchanging. While some teachings have developed and been further defined over the years, we still believe today what we believed two thousand years ago. And the very central truth of our faith is this: that God the Father so loved us that He sent His Son, Jesus, to be one of us so that He could die for us and save us from our sins. After He died, He rose again on the third day in proof of His power over sin and death.

Even more than that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, this same Jesus now gives Himself to us in the Eucharist: Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. It is not a mere symbol of Jesus that we consume at Communion. It is really and truly Christ Himself, present under the appearance of bread and wine. Is there anything truer, better or more beautiful than that?

This is why I am Catholic. I know in my mind and believe with all my heart that everything we profess in the Creed is true, is good and is very beautiful indeed. And I hope that that is reason enough for you to be Catholic.

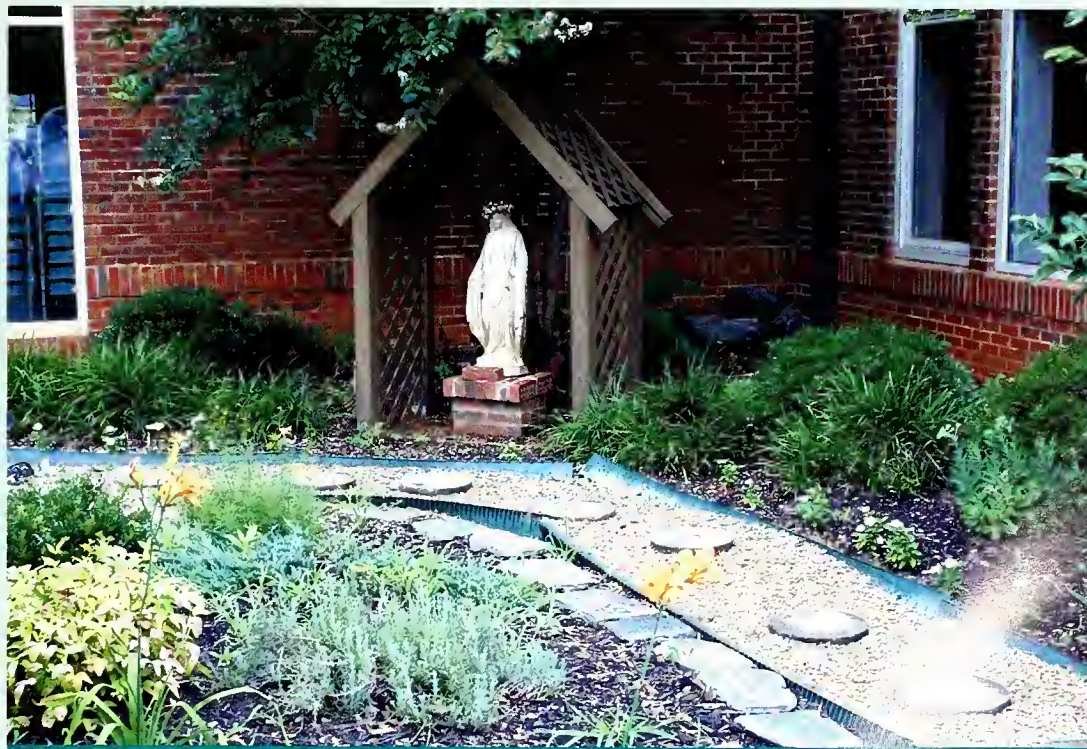


# *St. Mark*

HUNTERSVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1997



*When St. Mark Church was established in 1997, Mass was celebrated in a bowling alley, earning the parish the nickname "Our Lady of the Lanes."*



*St. Mark, Huntersville*





# St. Joseph Vietnamese

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 1998



*Twenty members of Charlotte's Vietnamese community first came together in worship in 1981.  
Bishop Peter Jugis dedicated a 23,000-square-foot church in 2004.*



*Dancers from St. Joseph Vietnamese Church perform at the church dedication in 2004.*







# *Our Lady of Guadalupe*

CHARLOTTE, ESTABLISHED 2002



*Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Charlotte serves Hispanic people.*

*Traditional shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe showing fresh roses. The dew-moistened out-of-season flowers were a sign from the Blessed Mother in 1531 when she appeared in Mexico.*

*Shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe showing Juan Diego to whom the Blessed Mother appeared.*







## *Divine Redeemer*

BOONVILLE, ESTABLISHED 2003



*The 18,000-square-foot Divine Redeemer (Divino Redentor) Church was dedicated in 2004. The church was designed to make the Hispanic parishioners, most of whom are natives of Mexico, feel at home. The exterior features stucco walls and a red tile roof. The crucifix and altar that adorn the church were crafted in Mexico.*





## OUR LADY OF THE AMERICAS

*BISCOE, ESTABLISHED 1989*

*A Mission of Our Lady  
of the Annunciation, Albemarle*

*Our Lady of the Americas was founded in 1989 as a multi-cultural  
outreach to the rapidly growing Hispanic community.  
It is the first Catholic church in Montgomery County.*



## SACRED HEART CHURCH

*WADESBORO, ESTABLISHED 1942*

*A Mission of St. James Church,  
Hamlet*

*When thousands of soldiers trained in the Wadesboro  
area during World War II, Mass was celebrated in a  
local theatre.*

## SACRED HEART CHURCH

*BURNSVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1950*

*A Mission of St. Andrea,  
Mars Hill*

*The 1962 church building was dedicated by Bishop  
Vincent Waters. At the time, the local Catholic  
population numbered 28.*





## ST. JUDE CHURCH

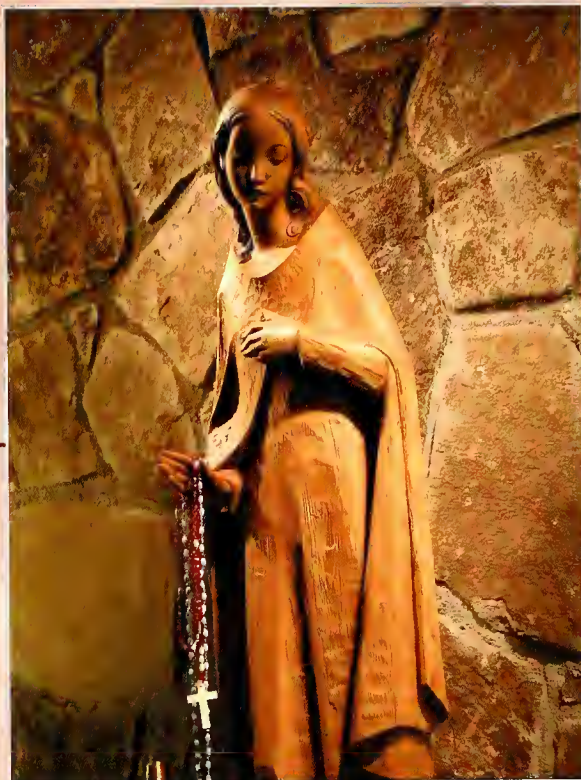
*SAPPHIRE VALLEY,  
ESTABLISHED 1972*

*A Mission of Sacred Heart,  
Brevard*

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*A parishioner designed and sculpted this Madonna  
as well as the Stations of the Cross at the church.*

*Architectural students from The Catholic University  
of America in Washington, D.C. designed models for  
the St. Jude Church as part of a class project.*





## CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY

*BLOWING ROCK, ESTABLISHED 1947*

*A Mission of St. Elizabeth of the Hill Country, Boone*

*Land and construction seed money for Church of the Epiphany were donated by a Florida couple who vacationed in the Blowing Rock area during the 1940s.*



*The exterior of St. Bernadette was created in part with stone from the Linville area, and the sanctuary's rear wall was fashioned of glass to allow a view of Grandfather Mountain and its famous mile-high swinging bridge.*

## ST. BERNADETTE CHURCH

*LINVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1988*

*A Mission of St. Lucien, Spruce Pine*



*Statues of St. Bernadette before the Blessed Mother*

## ST. FRANCES OF ROME

*SPARTA, ESTABLISHED 1955*

*A Mission of St. Francis of Assisi, Jefferson*

*Glennary priests served St. Frances of Rome until 1998, when diocesan priests assumed pastoral care.*





## ST. STEPHEN CHURCH

*ELKIN, ESTABLISHED 1956*

*A Mission of  
St. John Baptiste de la Salle,  
North Wilkesboro*

*In the spring of 1955, construction of St. Stephen Church was started. The land on which the church was built was purchased from Chatham Manufacturing Company for \$1.*



## CHRIST THE KING

*KINGS MOUNTAIN,  
ESTABLISHED 1961*

*A Mission of St. Mary, Shelby*

*The first Catholic family in the Kings Mountain area is said to have settled here in the mid-1930s.*

## ST. HELEN CHURCH

*SPENCER MTN., ESTABLISHED 1914*

*A Mission of Our Lady of Consolation,  
Charlotte*

*Bishop Leo Haid, of Belmont Abbey, directed the building of St. Helen Church to serve the black Catholic population in the area. In August 2003, the church celebrated a homecoming to which original families of the church were invited. Over 150 attended the special event.*





## HOLY TRINITY

*TAYLORSVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1959*

*A Mission of St. Philip,  
Statesville*

*When founded in 1984, Mass at Holy Trinity was celebrated  
in a farmhouse.*

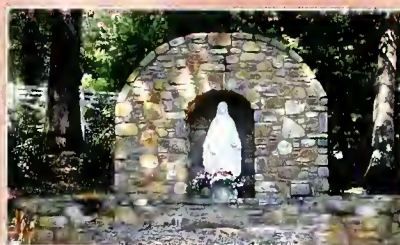


*In 1953, five Catholic families in Marion purchased a house on  
South Main Street and prepared it for use as a chapel. The present  
church was dedicated in 1976.*

## OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS

*MARION, ESTABLISHED 1951*

*A Mission of St. Charles Borromeo,  
Morganton*



## ST. JOSEPH CHURCH

*KANNAPOLIS,  
ESTABLISHED 1945*

*A Mission of St. James, Concord*

*A fire in the spring of 1949 destroyed the St. Joseph  
Church. A military chapel on the North Carolina  
coast was purchased and transported to  
Kannapolis where it was assembled in time for  
Christmas Eve midnight Mass that same year.*





## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



*CANTON, ESTABLISHED 1954*

*A Mission of St. John,  
Waynesville*

*In 1954, the 54 members of the Canton mission gathered with Bishop Vincent S. Waters of Raleigh for a church dedication service. The event had added significance for one group of parishioners who received the Sacrament of Confirmation during the Mass.*



## IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

*HAYESVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1954*

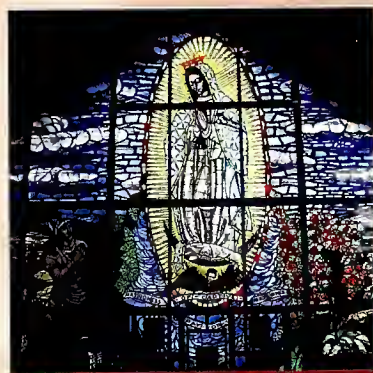
*A Mission of St. William Parish,  
Murphy*

*During the 1950s Mass in Hayesville was celebrated in a converted restaurant. The building also served as the office and home of the Glenmary Sisters who provided health care and social services in the area.*

## OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

*CHEROKEE, ESTABLISHED 1962*

*A Mission of St. Joseph,  
Bryson City*



*Land donated in 1960 for Our Lady of Guadalupe Church was part of the Cherokee Indian reservation. Plans for the church had to be approved by the tribal council before construction could begin.*



## OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS

*HIGHLANDS, ESTABLISHED 1954*

*A Mission of St. Francis, Franklin*



*To celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a bell and tower were added to Our Lady of the Mountains in 1990.*



## PRINCE OF PEACE

*ROBBINSVILLE, ESTABLISHED 1958*

*A Mission of Holy Redeemer,  
Andrews*

*Glenmary Missionary priests of Prince of Peace often held tent revivals in Robbinsville in the early 1960s.*



*Catholics in Stokes County met in a recreation center and a Moravian church before constructing the Good Shepherd church.*

## GOOD SHEPHERD

*KING, ESTABLISHED 1981*



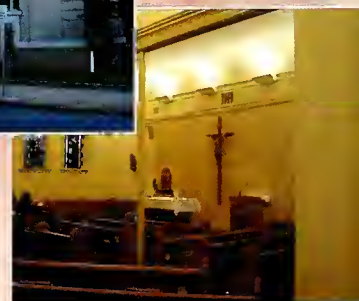
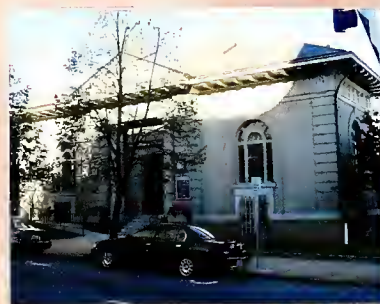
*A Mission of  
St. Benedict  
the Moor,  
Winston-  
Salem*

## OUR LADY OF FATIMA

*WINSTON-SALEM, ESTABLISHED 1954*

*A Mission of Our Lady of Mercy,  
Winston-Salem*

*The number of Catholics in the Winston-Salem area grew rapidly in 1954 when employees of a manufacturing plant were relocated from New Jersey to North Carolina.*



## CHURCHES IN THE DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE

ESTABLISHED	CLOSED	CITY	CHURCH OR MISSION	PAGE
1934		ALBEMARLE	Our Lady of the Annunciation	50
1958		ANDREWS	Holy Redeemer	105
1964		ARDEN	St. Barnabas	114
1948		ASHEBORO	St. Joseph	77
1866		ASHEVILLE	Basilica of St. Lawrence	23
1928		ASHEVILLE	St. Joan of Arc	45
1936	1973	ASHEVILLE	St. Anthony of Padua	
1959		ASHEVILLE	St. Eugene	104
1965		BELMONT	Queen of the Apostles	117
1961	1962	BESSEMER CITY	Bessemer City Mission	
1989		BISCOE	Our Lady of the Americas	149
1947		BLOWING ROCK	Church of the Epiphany	151
1957		BOONE	St. Elizabeth	99
2003		BOONVILLE	Divine Redeemer	148
1937		BREVARD	Sacred Heart	52
1941		BRYSON CITY	St. Joseph	63
1950		BURNSVILLE	Sacred Heart	149
1954		CANTON	Immaculate Conception	154
1852		CHARLOTTE	St. Peter	22
1939		CHARLOTTE	St. Patrick Cathedral	57
1947	1974	CHARLOTTE	St. Mary	
1948		CHARLOTTE	Our Lady of the Assumption	81
1955		CHARLOTTE	St. Ann	94
1956		CHARLOTTE	Our Lady of Consolation	96
1957		CHARLOTTE	St. Gabriel	102
1961		CHARLOTTE	St. Vincent de Paul	108
1977		CHARLOTTE	St. John Neumann	121
1978		CHARLOTTE	St. Thomas Aquinas	126
1986		CHARLOTTE	St. Matthew	136
1987		CHARLOTTE	St. Luke	138
1995		CHARLOTTE	St. John Lee Korean	140
1998		CHARLOTTE	St. Joseph Vietnamese	146
2002		CHARLOTTE	Our Lady of Guadalupe	147
1962		CHEROKEE	Our Lady of Guadalupe	154
1950	1978	CHERRYVILLE	Immaculate Heart of Mary	
1978		CLEMMONS	Holy Family	128
1869		CONCORD	St. James	24



ESTABLISHED	CLOSED	CITY	CHURCH OR MISSION	PAGE
1982	1993	CULLOWHEE	Christ the King	
1962		DALLAS	St. Vincent Mission	
1979		DENVER	Holy Spirit	131
1985	2003	DOBSON	Sagrado Corazon	
1939		EDEN	St. Joseph of the Hills	60
1916		ELK PARK	Sacred Heart Chapel	
1956		ELKIN	St. Stephen	152
1960	1974	FONTANA	Our Lady of the Lake Chapel	
1950		FOREST CITY	Immaculate Conception	82
1953		FRANKLIN	St. Francis of Assisi	87
1903		GASTONIA	St. Michael	34
1877		GREENSBORO	St. Benedict	29
1928		GREENSBORO	St. Mary	46
1952		GREENSBORO	Our Lady of Grace	84
1956		GREENSBORO	St. Pius X	98
1974		GREENSBORO	St. Paul the Apostle	120
1877	1974	GREENSBORO	St. Agnes	
1910		HAMLET	St. James	37
1954		HAYESVILLE	Immaculate Heart of Mary	154
1869		HENDERSONVILLE	Immaculate Conception	27
1913		HICKORY	St. Aloysius	41
1928		HIGH POINT	Immaculate Heart of Mary	47
1941		HIGH POINT	Christ the King	66
1954		HIGHLANDS	Our Lady of the Mountains	155
1885		HOT SPRINGS	Chapel of the Redeemer	
1997		HUNTERSVILLE	St. Mark	145
1963		JEFFERSON	St. Francis of Assisi	111
1945		KANNAPOLIS	St. Joseph	153
1969		KERNERSVILLE	Holy Cross	118
1981		KING	Good Shepherd	156
1961		KINGS MOUNTAIN	Christ the King	152
1957	1972	LANCE COVE	Lance Cove Mission Chapel	
1932		LENOIR	St. Francis of Assisi	48
1946		LEXINGTON	Our Lady of the Rosary	74
1977	1985	LIBERTY	Liberty Catholics	
1944		LINCOLNTON	St. Dorothy	71
1941	1993	LINVILLE	St. Patricia	
1988		LINVILLE	St. Bernadette	151
1962	1963	LOWELL	St. Benedict	
1969	1975	LOWELL	St. Benedict	

ESTABLISHED	CLOSED	CITY	CHURCH OR MISSION	PAGE
1969		MAGGIE VALLEY	St. Margaret	119
1976		MARION	Our Lady of the Angels	153
1981		MARS HILL	St. Andrew the Apostle	132
1958		MOCKSVILLE	St. Francis of Assisi	106
1942		MONROE	Our Lady of Lourdes	70
1947	1977	MONROE	St. Joseph	
1946		MOORESVILLE	St. Therese	75
1947		MORGANTON	St. Charles Borromeo	76
1921		MOUNT AIRY	Holy Angels	42
1843	1880s	MOUNT HOLLY	St. Joseph (Historical Site 1979)	
1952		MURPHY	St. William	85
1978		NEWTON	St. Joseph	130
1952		NORTH WILKESBORO	St. John Baptist de La Salle	86
1962		REIDSVILLE	Holy Infant	109
1937	1990s	REVERE	Church of the Little Flower (Historical Site)	
1958		ROBBINSVILLE	Prince of Peace	156
1882		SALISBURY	Sacred Heart	31
1941	1972	SALISBURY	Our Lady of Victory	
1972		SAPPHIRE VALLEY	St. Jude	150
1884		SHELBY	St. Mary	32
1955		SPARTA	St. Frances of Rome	151
1914		SPENCER MOUNTAIN	St. Helen	152
1935		SPRUCE PINE	St. Lucien	51
1870		STATESVILLE	St. Philip the Apostle	28
1933		SWANNANOVA	St. Margaret Mary	49
1955		SYLVA	St. Mary	95
1959		TAYLORSVILLE	Holy Trinity	153
1963	1968	TEXANS	St. William Chapel	
1951		THOMASVILLE	Our Lady of the Highways	83
1911		TRYON	St. John the Baptist	40
1942		WADESBORO	Sacred Heart	149
1926		WAYNESVILLE	St. John the Evangelist	43
1891		WINSTON-SALEM	St. Leo the Great	33
1940		WINSTON-SALEM	St. Benedict the Moor	62
1954		WINSTON-SALEM	Our Lady of Fatima Chapel	156
1954		WINSTON-SALEM	Our Lady of Mercy	89
1982	2003	YADKINVILLE	Cristo Rey	



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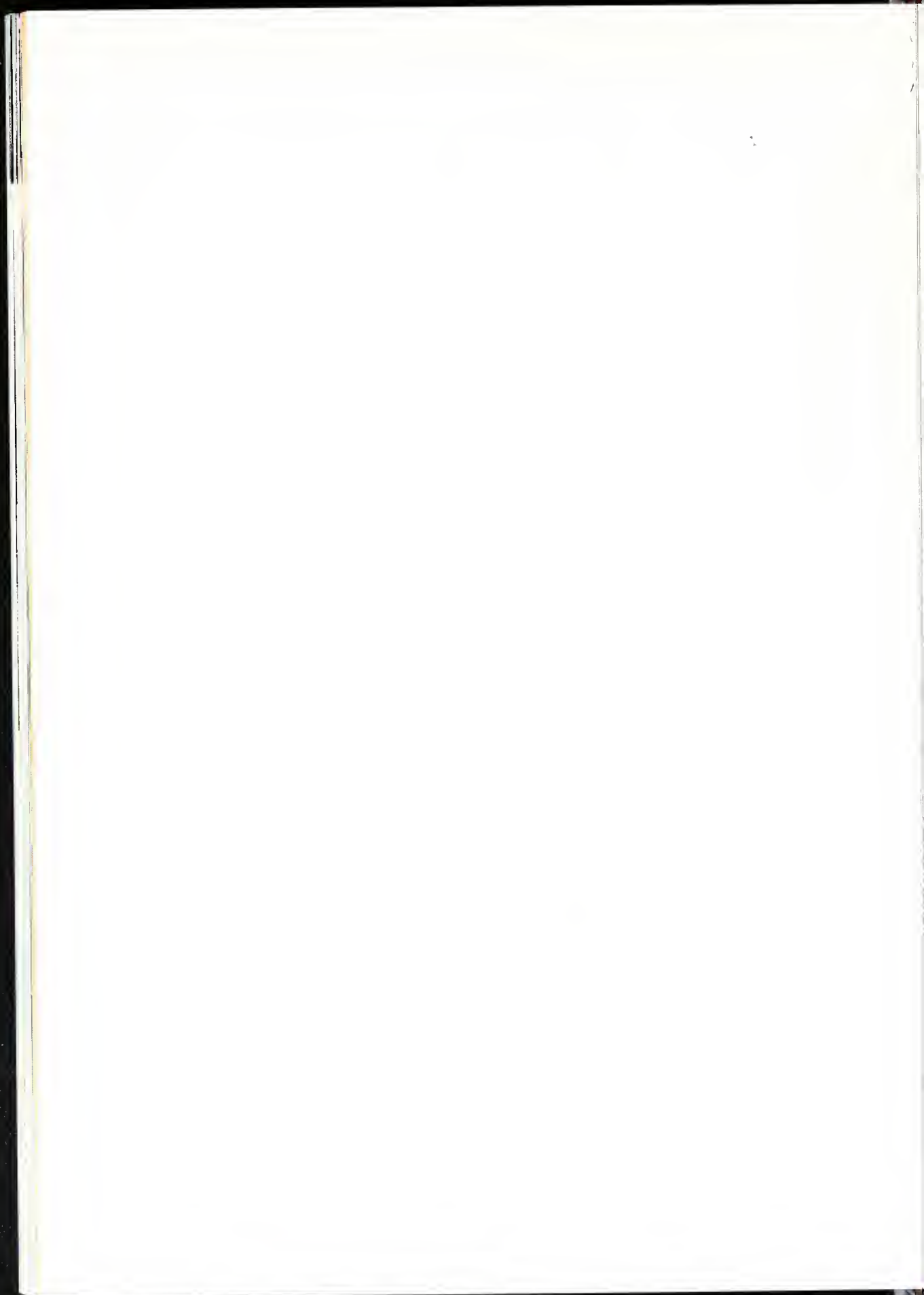
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*Voices and Places of The People of God*

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